

Cuba and US to establish first joint venture in field of biotechnology



Havana, September 26 (RHC)-- Cuba announced on Wednesday the establishment of the first U.S.-Cuba company in the field of biotechnology.

The new enterprise, under the name Innovative Immunotherapy Alliance SA, is a joint venture between the Havana-based Center for Molecular Immunology and the Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center of the United States. It will operate out of the Special Development Zone of Mariel, west of Havana, and will be devoted to research and development of new anti-cancer drugs.

A press release by Biocubafarma, a Cuban biotechnology and pharmaceutical umbrella group, said the new biotechnology company will have among its products the drug CIMAVax-EGF, a therapy against lung cancer, and three additional immunotherapy treatments developed in Cuba for different types of tumors.

During the first years the company will focus on scientific and clinical research to demonstrate the safety and effectiveness of these novel treatments in the U.S. If the studies are successful, said the communique, the company will then be able to export the products for the benefit of patients in the U.S., once the relevant approvals have been obtained.

The Cuban press release calls the joint venture establishment a historic step in scientific cooperation between the U.S. and Cuba that will allow for the advancement of research and the development of new anti-cancer drugs potentially prolonging and improving the lives of thousands of patients in the United States.

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