MorphoSys AG (Frankfurt: MOR; Prime Standard Segment) announced today that promising initial in vitro and in vivo data for the internal cancer antibody program, MOR202, were presented at the “Human Antibodies & Hybridomas” conference held in Dublin yesterday. The fully-human antibodies generated from MorphoSys’ HuCAL GOLD® library, are directed against the target molecule CD38, which is heavily over-expressed on the surface of certain cancer cells. The MOR202 program is currently in pre-clinical development for the treatment of multiple myeloma and other blood-cancer related diseases. In line with its corporate strategy, MorphoSys plans to out-license the MOR202 antibody program before start of clinical development.

The MOR202 antibodies were initially characterized in detail in various in vitro assays. By directing the MorphoSys antibodies against primary patient tumor material and specific hematologic cancer cell lines, the assays demonstrated that the antibodies were able to kill cancer cells efficiently. A MOR202 antibody also proved to be highly effective in an in vivo animal model. The HuCAL® IgG antibody was administered regularly to tumor-bearing mice over a period of between three and five weeks. In various experimental settings, different antibody constructs, dosages and treatment regimens were examined. In all cases, treatment with MOR202 antibody led to a significant slowdown of tumor growth, in some cases no tumor could be detected at the end of the observation period. MorphoSys has submitted several U.S. patent applications. These relate to specific anti-CD38 antibodies and their use.

Multiple myeloma, also called plasmocytoma, is a form of hematologic cancer that causes an increased overproduction of malignant plasma cells, particularly in the bone marrow. Plasma cells are a subset of white blood cells and are therefore key components of the immune system. In healthy individuals, the immune system acts as an efficient defense mechanism against pathogens and infectious diseases. The cause of multiple myeloma has not yet been fully identified, while incidence is increasing. Despite other forms of treatment currently available, there is an unmet medical need for new therapies for multiple myeloma. At present, only 30% of treated patients survive for more than 5 years under present alternative therapies.

“These initial pre-clinical results from our new MOR202 cancer program are very promising”, said Dr. Simon Moroney, Chief Executive Officer of MorphoSys AG. “With the target molecule CD38, we believe that we have chosen an interesting starting point for long-term improvement of the treatment of various hematologic cancer types.”
About MorphoSys:
MorphoSys develops and applies innovative technologies for the production of synthetic antibodies, which accelerate drug discovery and target characterization. Founded in 1992, the Company’s proprietary Human Combinatorial Antibody Library (HuCAL®) technology is used by researchers worldwide for human antibody generation. The Company currently has licensing and research collaborations with Bayer (Berkeley, California/USA), Biogen Idec Inc. (Cambridge, Massachusetts/USA), Boehringer Ingelheim (Ingelheim, Germany), Bristol-Myers Squibb (Wilmington, Delaware/USA), Centocor Inc. (Malvern, Pennsylvania/USA), GPC Biotech AG (Munich/Germany), Hoffmann-La Roche AG (Basel/Switzerland), ImmunoGen Inc. (Cambridge, Massachusetts/USA), Novartis AG (Basel/Switzerland), Novoplant GmbH (Gatersleben/Germany), Oridis Biomed GmbH (Graz/Austria), Pfizer Inc. (Delaware/USA), ProChon Biotech Ltd. (Rehovot/Israel), Schering AG (Berlin/Germany) and Xoma Ltd. (Berkeley, California/USA). For further information please visit the corporate website at: http://www.morphosys.com/.

Statements included in this press release which are not historical in nature are intended to be, and are hereby identified as, “forward-looking statements” for purposes of the safe harbour provided by Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended by the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Forward-looking statements may be identified by words including “anticipates”, “believes”, “intends”, “estimates”, “expects” and similar expressions. The company cautions readers that forward-looking statements, including without limitation those relating to the company’s future operations and business prospects, are subject to certain risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially from those indicated in the forward-looking statements. Factors that may affect future operations and business prospects include, but are not limited to, clinical and scientific results and developments concerning corporate collaborations and the company’s proprietary rights and other factors described in the prospectus relating to the company’s recent public offering.

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