THE FIRST BIOTECHNOLOGY COMPANY THAT MEASURES TELOMERES

- ***Dr. María Blasco, the Botín Foundation and Matlin Associates establish Life Length, S.L.***

- ***Dr. Blasco has developed the most precise method to measure telomeres which are key to determine biological age with far-reaching applications in medicine and biotechnology***

Madrid, December 15, 2010 - ***Life Length, S.L.*** is a new biotechnology company set up to measure the length of telomeres which form caps at the end of chromosomes and that have a fundamental role in avoiding the break down and the aging of cells and organisms. The breakthroughs that Dr. Maria Blasco has made at the Spanish National Cancer Research Centre (Centro Nacional de Investigaciones Oncológicas, or CNIO) in Madrid, Spain form the founding basis of the company. Telomeres are the best known measure of biological, as opposed to chronological, age and are potential indicators of the state of health of an organism. The process of aging, together with associated disorders, occurs at varying speeds for different people. As a result, chronological age, as measured in years, does not always present the same degree of aging amongst different people.

Life Length, S.L. has been established to commercially exploit telomere length measuring techniques (initially as indicators of biological age), providing them to the pharmaceutical industry, hospitals and clinics, as well as other research laboratories interested in the measurement of telomeres.

The founding capital of ***Life Length, S.L.*** has been provided by Dr. Blasco, the Botín Foundation and Matlin Associates. The company is the result of the longstanding support provided by the Botín Foundation to Dr. Blasco. Following its close association with this project, Matlin Associates, a corporate finance and strategic consulting firm, has also decided to take a stake in ***Life Length, S.L.*** and will manage the company until new partners are incorporated within an 18 to 24 month time frame.

The importance of telomeres was recognized in last year's Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine. Studies with genetically modified mice from María Blasco's research group have shown that telomeres are essential to preserve the regenerative capacity of tissues and organs to the extent that when their length is cut back below a critical point, the organism begins to age. As a result, the length of telomeres, and particularly the absence of short telomeres, is a potential indicator of the age of cells and the general state of health of an organism. The length of telomeres also serves to predict cognitive defects that occur with aging, deterioration of the immune system, and the development of cardiovascular diseases, amongst others. In addition, it has been confirmed that certain life style habits can influence the speed at which telomeres shorten with age, which underscores the importance of telomere length as an indicator of the general state of health. The technique developed by Dr. Blasco and the CNIO team measures short telomeres with superior precision to other known techniques.

Dr. Blasco was awarded this year's "Santiago Ramón y Cajal" National Research Prize, as well as the Pre-Clinical Research Prize of the Lilly Foundation. In the past, she has also been awarded the Gold Medal of the European Organization of Molecular Biology (EMBO), the

Korber Prize of European Science, the Josef Steiner Prize of Cancer Research, the King Jaime I Prize for Basic Research and the Carmen and Severo Ochoa Prize, amongst others.

Life Length, S.L.: www.lifelength.com

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