Start-up and 1st Coordination Meeting
in the framework of SfP NATO Project No. 982838

Place: “Victor Babes” National Institute, Bucharest
Date: 23-24 November 2007

On November 24, 2007, in “Victor Babes:” National Institute in the framework of SfP NATO Project No. 982838 the Start-up and First Coordination Meeting was held.

Participation
The meeting comprised all the Project Co-directors and members of the Romanian teams:

- Prof. W. Voelter (NPD)
- Dr. M. Neagu (PPD)
- Prof. D.-L. Radu (Project Co-Director)
- Prof. C. Vorgias (Project Co-Director)
- Prof. O. Tsitsilonis (Project Co-Director)

Radu’s team members:
Dr. C. Coman
Dr. B. Marinescu
Dr. M.Grosu
Ph.D student A.Iancu

Neagu’s team members:
Dr. G. Manda
Dr. C. Constantin
Ph.D student R.Huica
Ph.D student I. Neagoe

Agenda
The meeting had the following agenda:

1. Equipment purchase for partner country institutes
   - Victor Babes National Institute (IVB) - Varioskan Flash Spectral Scanning Multimode Reader and an automatized ELISA line
   - I. Cantacuzino National Institute (IC) - Flow cytometer
2. NATO SfP project web site
3. Training schedule for the first year of the project
4. Personnel changes in the partner country team members
5. Scientific and technical issues to be solved in the first year
6. Next coordination meeting

Conclusions and decisions
1. After discussing the administrative issues regarding the equipment purchase for partner country the following decisions were established:
   - National auction will be launched at the beginning of 2008 in the framework of the Romanian laws guiding equipment purchase for research purpose;
   - Technical specifications for the mentioned equipment will be established
   - International auction will be launched and offers will be gathered from the companies entitled to commercialize the auctioned equipment,
   - Offers will be sent to the NPD who will analyze them and will indicate the best equipment that fits the stated characteristics. The task of sending the gathered information to the NPD will be done by the PPD for both Romanian Institutes;
   - Upon evaluation and selection by means of „first quality and second price” the NPD will forward to NATO all relative information (offers, specifications, etc) regarding the mentioned purchase;
   - Financial details.

2. The web site for NATO SfP project will be established by the PPD in collaboration with Project Co-Director Prof. Radu and will have the following characteristics:
   - Project plan and project evolution according to NATO 6 monthly reports;
   - Dissemination workshops;
   - Links to the involved institutes from NATO countries, namely University of Tuebingen, University of Athens and from Partner country Victor Babes and I. Cantacuzino National Institutes.

3. After discussion regarding the training schedule that matches the first year of project needs and the proposed plan, the following exchange visits were agreed:
• From IVB - Dr. C. Constantin will have one month training in Prof Vorgias Laboratory, trained in gene cloning techniques;

• From IC - PhD student A. Iancu will have one month training in Prof Tsitsilonis Laboratory, trained in the development of cellular models of apoptosis induction;

• Dr. C. Constantin and PhD student A. Iancu visits are scheduled for June 2008 and both will attend *The 33rd FEBS Congress, Biochemistry of Cell Regulation* and encouraged to apply for YSF bursaries;

• From IVB - PhD student R. Huica will have one month training in Prof Voelter’s Laboratory in mass spectrometry and the date will be established after January 15, depending on Prof Voelter’s schedule.

4. Due to the bursaries obtained by the following personnel:
   • PhD student Anna Gruber from IC
   • Dr. Radu Eugen from IVB

Replacements were discussed and, after mutual agreement, it was established that Dr. Melania Grosu and PhD student Radu Huica respectively, can cover the planned tasks, both possessing matching CVs and background in accordance with the proposed NATO project.

Prof. Voelter will forward the document concerning the mentioned changes and the CVs of the replacements after receiving the information from the PPD that is in charge for both personnel replacements in the Romanian institutes.

5. The involved Romanian teams will have the following research tasks during the first year of the project:
   • The PPD team will purchase the following cell lines: U937, THP-1, MD and AML-139;
   • Prof. Radu’s group will initiate the establishment of cultures of Gram negative (*Salmonella, Klebsiella, Pasteurella* ssp) and Gram positive bacteria (*Streptococcus* and *Corynebacterium* ssp), in infectious and attenuated forms;
   • Prof. Radu’s team will infect the afore mentioned cell lines delivered by Dr. Neagu’s team using the specific bacterial strains and harvest culture supernatants. Supernatants will be frozen at -80°C in the presence of proteases inhibitors. Various experimental conditions will be tested such as live or inactivated bacteria, cell concentration, bacterial concentration, time of infection.
• Under various experimental conditions, apoptosis stage will be monitored in the cell lines by means of flow cytometry in PPD’s laboratory.

• The PPD team will start standardizing the competitive ELISA coating conditions (type of microplate, coating buffer, temperature, incubation time, stationary versus rotation coating conditions, plate saturation, coating stability, washing conditions) using the peptides delivered by Prof. Voelter and Prof. Tsitsiloni’s laboratories. Preliminary results will be obtained for antigen-capture reagent using polyclonal/monoclonal antibodies delivered by Prof. Voelter and Prof. Tsitsilonis laboratories or commercially available ones;

• Prof. Radu’s group will initiate the experimental animal models of infection using live bacteria. Plasma will be harvested from BALB/c and SPF mice and frozen at -80°C in the presence of protease inhibitors, until shipment to Prof Voelter Laboratory for mass spectrometry analysis and preliminary testing in Dr. Neagu’s Laboratory by the competitive ELISA developed.

• Prof. Radu’s group will study cellular immune parameters in different strains of mice and establish the control/background values that will be used as cut-off values in the in vivo infection experiments;

• 6 months’ report will be forwarded to the NPD by PPD including results gathered from both Romanian laboratories.

6. The next coordination meeting is planned for December 2008 and will be organized at the University of Tuebingen by the NPD, Prof. W. Voelter.
Start-up Meeting “Victor Babes” National Institute, Bucharest
23-24 November 2007
Start-up Meeting opened by Prof. W. Voelter (NPD)
Assist. Prof. O. Tsitsilonis (Project Co-Director) lecture
Prof. W. Voelter conducting the meeting
Prof. Andrei Petrescu’s invited lecture
Prof. D.-L. Radu (Project Co-Director) lecture

Friendly get together in the evening