Dear Colleague,

2013 has been an exciting year for HIV research. From what appears to be the first ever functional cure of a baby born with HIV1 to the encouraging experience of two Boston patients following bone marrow transplants,2 we have seen a series of tantalising indications of what may one day be possible in HIV treatment.

But how close to cure are we, really? And do we yet know what practical cure treatments will look like?

In this symposium, being held as part of Bristol-Myers Squibb’s ‘Partnering for Cure’ medical education programme, you will help decide the answers to these questions. We are putting HIV cure research on trial and we need you to be the jury.

Our expert international faculty will present the evidence for and against the success of cure research. For the defence, Giuseppe Pantaleo and Carlo Federico Perno will present evidence that cure is possible in antiretroviral disease. For the prosecution, Gary Behrens and Paul Alainci will highlight the biological and practical challenges facing HIV cure research. In a concluding session, the audience will have a chance to cross-examine the whole faculty and will ultimately reach a verdict.

We hope you can join us for what promises to be a challenging and enjoyable symposium — and for a discussion that will only become more important in the coming years.

Christine Katlama

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Professor Katlama has worked in HIV since 1982 and was involved in the HIV-1 discovery in 1986. Her group first demonstrated the impact of immune strategies, including HIV cure.

In 2001, she founded ORVACS, an international network for research in new drugs, viral resistance, novel antiretroviral strategies and HIV cure.

Professor Katlama is also actively involved in the ANRS (French National Agency for Research on AIDS and Viral Hepatitis), and runs the COREVIH Ile de France Centre body, which liaises with pharmaceutical companies and is in charge of several international programmes supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the European Commission.

She is a member of numerous international HIV advisory boards for pharmaceutical companies and is on the editorial boards of several journals, including the Lancet HIV.

Professor Katlama has received several awards, including: the French AIDS Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Maryland, USA, where he collaborated in the discovery and clinical application of the first antiviral drugs used in the therapy of HIV infection, including zidovudine, zalcitabine, stavudine and didanosine.

He is currently leading several international programmes for the European Guidelines on prevention and management of non-infectious diseases and is a member of the Expert Panel on Antiretroviral Therapy of the European AIDS Clinical Trials Network (EACS) and a member of the Board of Directors of the European AIDS Clinical Trials Network (RIS) and is a member of the European Committees for Antiretroviral and Microbicides Development.

José Alcamí

José Alcamí is Associate Professor of Immunology at the University of La Laguna (Spain) and the Comprehensive Cancer Research Center (CIBER-BCM) at the University of Seville (Spain). He is also a member of the European Network for Molecular and Cellular Virology (ENMC) at the National Institutes of Health, USA, the Pasteur Institute in Paris, the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute for Medical Research, Melbourne, Australia, and the European AIDS Clinical Trials Network (RIS) and is a member of the European Networks for Antiretroviral and Microbicides Development.

In 1999, he was awarded the first European AIDS Clinical Trials Network (EACS) Senior Investigator Award for excellence in the field.