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## **Dr. Rino Rappuoli, Head of Research for Novartis Vaccines, Honored with Prestigious Albert B. Sabin Gold Medal for Reverse Vaccinology**

- *Dr. Rappuoli is being recognized for his work in reverse vaccinology, a cutting-edge approach to vaccine research*
- *The reverse vaccinology approach has yielded the first broad spectrum meningitis serogroup B vaccine to reach Phase III, and is now being more broadly applied*
- *Sabin Gold Medal recognizes work in the field of vaccine discoveries, or vaccine treatable diseases*

**Cambridge, MA, April 28, 2009** — Dr. Rino Rappuoli, Head of Research for Novartis Vaccines, will be honored today with the prestigious Albert B. Sabin Gold Medal, which recognizes work in the field of vaccine discoveries, or vaccine treatable diseases. Dr. Rappuoli is being recognized for his work in pioneering reverse vaccinology, a cutting-edge approach that produces more effective vaccines faster, and provides novel antigens to attack diseases science currently cannot prevent. The reverse vaccinology approach has yielded the first broad spectrum investigational recombinant meningitis serogroup B vaccine to reach Phase III, and is now being applied toward researching vaccines for other viral diseases, including Syphilis and Hepatitis C.

“It is an honor to receive this award for pioneering reverse vaccinology,” said Dr. Rappuoli. “It is our hope that new innovative technologies like reverse vaccinology will help solve global health problems such as meningitis B and other viral diseases, filling a major unmet medical need in society.”

The Sabin Vaccine Institute, which bestows the award, is a non-profit organization dedicated to preventing and curing infectious and neglected tropical diseases worldwide. The Institute has awarded the Gold Medal each year since 1994 to a member of the research community.

“It is an honor for the Sabin Vaccine Institute to present Dr. Rappuoli with our Gold Medal Award. Dr. Rappuoli’s accomplishments are extraordinary because they are not limited to one scientific field. In fact, they blur and erase those boundaries with their very scope and breadth,” said Dr. Peter Hotez M.D., Ph.D., President of the Sabin Vaccine Institute, and Distinguished Research Professor at the George Washington University School of Medicine. “His use of ‘reverse vaccinology’ has left an indelible mark on the vaccine world and, ultimately, could improve the lives of countless people. Dr. Sabin’s legacy truly lives on in the work of dedicated researchers like Dr. Rappuoli.”

Novartis’ MenB vaccine is the most advanced vaccine to date that has been developed using Dr. Rappuoli’s reverse vaccinology approach. By first decoding the entire genetic makeup of a pathogenic meningococcal serogroup B strain, Novartis discovered 580 novel proteins. Reproduced through genetic engineering for further investigation, the vaccine contains the antigens that showed the greatest ability to stimulate the immune

system to kill bacteria from a panel of strains of meningococcal serogroup B representative of global and temporal diversity.

### **About Novartis**

Novartis Vaccines and Diagnostics is a division of Novartis focused on the development of preventive treatments. The division has two businesses: Novartis Vaccines and Chiron. Novartis Vaccines is the world's fifth-largest vaccines manufacturer and second-largest supplier of flu vaccines in the US. The division's products also include meningococcal, pediatric and travel vaccines. Chiron, the blood testing and molecular diagnostics business, is dedicated to preventing the spread of infectious diseases through the development of novel blood-screening tools that protect the world's blood supply.

Novartis AG provides healthcare solutions that address the evolving needs of patients and societies. Focused solely on healthcare, Novartis offers a diversified portfolio to best meet these needs: innovative medicines, preventive vaccines, diagnostic tools, cost-saving generic pharmaceuticals, and consumer health products. Novartis is the only company with leading positions in these areas. In 2008, the Group's continuing operations achieved net sales of USD 41.5 billion and net income of USD 8.2 billion. Approximately USD 7.2 billion was invested in R&D activities throughout the Group. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ approximately 96,700 full-time-equivalent associates and operate in more than 140 countries around the world. For more information, please visit <http://www.novartis.com>.

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