

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BEST MINDS IN HUMAN GENOMICS TO GATHER IN KUALA LUMPUR IN 2015

- *Successful National Bid Strengthens Malaysia's Position to be Leader on the
Bioinformatics and Genomics Research Industry*

Kuala Lumpur, 8 June 2011 – The prestigious annual Human Genome Meeting (HGM) organised by the international Human Genome Organisation (HUGO) will be held for the first time in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in the year 2015, as announced by Professor Edison T Liu, President of HUGO.

To be held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, the HGM 2015 is expected to attract 1,000 delegates comprising researchers, academicians, clinicians, students and others in science and human genome industry to Malaysia.

The Human Genome Meeting is a series of annual conferences organised by the Human Genome Association with an aim to update and increase knowledge in the ever-evolving field of human genome research, and is always considered a major event for both renowned scientists and young investigators. HGM has travelled to Europe, Asia, Australia, the Middle East and the Americas in the past 15 years. Apart from Kuala Lumpur, seven other cities were also bidding for the Human Genome Meetings to be held in 2014 to 2017.

Kuala Lumpur was chosen as the preferred destination by the members of the HUGO Council in full accord following the presentation of a competitive bid by the Malaysian team in Dubai, UAE recently. Facilitated by the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB), the winning team comprises Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) and Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

"Malaysia is rising in South East Asia in investment and quality of genomic and genetic sciences. Their hosting of HGM 2015 is a mark of international recognition of these advances. We look forward to partnering with USM in making HGM 2015 a celebration of genomic sciences in the region," remarked Professor Edison T Liu, President of HUGO.

Professor Asma Ismail, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research & Innovation), USM, said "Malaysia is proud to be chosen as the next destination for HGM 2015. As the local host, USM is pleased to collaborate with HUGO in organising and delivering a successful conference in Kuala Lumpur. Themed 'Transforming Human Genomics for A Sustainable Tomorrow', the meeting will lay foundation on the scientific dynamics in formulating a future agenda in this field."

Professor Abdul Aziz Baba, Dean, School of Medical Sciences, USM, Kelantan commented, "This international meeting will enhance the research networking between our local scientists and the world's leading scientists from many different fields of human genomics and provide a platform to share knowledge and experiences."

The HGM 2015 will play an instrumental role in promoting Malaysia as a leader on the global bioinformatics and genomics research industry, expediting scientific breakthroughs in the medical, agricultural and industrial sectors. The meeting will be an excellent opportunity for the country to showcase its genomic research capabilities taking into account the 12 genomic centres located all over Malaysia.

Associate Professor Dr Zilfalil Alwi, Consultant Pediatrician & Clinical Geneticist, School of Medical Sciences, USM and Chairman of the Organising Committee added, "Malaysia has long established its participation with the HUGO Pan-Asia SNP Consortium. The country aspires towards a concerted contribution to the progress of the consortium and the advancement in genomics research."

Mr Zulkefli Hj Sharif, Chief Executive Officer, MyCEB said, "The bid success reinforces Malaysia's competitive position in the global business tourism market. This is in line with the government's Economic Transformation Programme which envisions Malaysia as a major education centre of choice and a pivotal hub in the global business tourism industry.

The decision to host the HGM 2015 in Kuala Lumpur is also supported by the positioning of Malaysia as a role model amongst developing nations; an economically prosperous moderate Islamic country which encourages dialogue within the society and the government.

Upcoming conferences will be held in Sydney (2012), Singapore (2013) and Geneva (2014).

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NOTE TO EDITORS

About the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB)

MyCEB was established in 2009 by Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia to further strengthen Malaysia's business tourism brand and position for the international meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE) market. A non-profit organisation, MyCEB serves as a central hub to assist meeting and event planners to bid for and stage regional and international business events in Malaysia and act as a conduit for national product development. MyCEB's goal is to improve its rankings as an international meetings destination within ICCA¹ and to grow international business tourism arrivals to Malaysia.

www.myceb.com.my

About Human Genome Organisation (HUGO)

The Human Genome Organisation (HUGO) was conceived in late April 1988, at the first meeting on genome mapping and sequencing at Cold Spring Harbor, New York. Each year, HUGO holds its annual Human Genome Meeting (HGM) designed to update and increase knowledge in the ever-evolving field of human genome research. The meetings centre on a stimulating and interesting programme of plenary lectures, symposia, workshops, and include poster presentations and social events which will all help to make any HGM the ideal forum to share information with researchers in both science and industry. HUGO's human genome meetings are widely seen as a "must-attend" event in the world conference calendar.

<http://www.hugo-international.org/>

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¹ ICCA is the International Congress and Convention Association