Kathleen Kennedy Townsend to Chair Global Virus Network (GVN) Board of Directors

The Associated Press

BALTIMORE--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan 16, 2013--The Global Virus Network (GVN), a coalition of the world's leading medical virology research centers working to prevent illness and death from viral disease, today announced the addition of ten members to its Board of Directors; Kathleen Kennedy Townsend as Chairperson, Lisa Paulsen, Romain Murenzi, G. Steven Burrill, Salim S. Abdool Karim, Andrew Cheng, Longde Wang, N. Scott Fine, Nicolas De Santis and Raj Shah. The announcement was made today by Robert C. Gallo, co-founder of the GVN and Chair of GVN's Scientific Leadership Board.

"The addition of these new Board members will add valuable resources to the GVN and will greatly enhance GVN's global visibility," said Dr. Gallo, Director of the Institute of Human Virology at the University of Maryland School of Medicine. "One of the biggest lessons we learned after discovering the first human retroviruses, including co-discovery of HIV as the cause of AIDS, and developing the HIV blood test, is that researchers need a GVN to share and disseminate important information seamlessly, without government politics or financial limitations. Having such an organization will result in millions of lives being saved." As Chair of the Board, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend will bring global leaders together to support the mission of the GVN. "The global community faces serious threats from new viruses every day, including SARS, Hantavirus, Dengue, West Nile and the specter of pandemic influenza viruses," said Kennedy Townsend. "Our best defense is a rigorous and worldwide research network poised to engage in any outbreak situation. GVN is the very safety net that we need to protect the health of the world's citizens from new viral threats. To put this safety net in place requires support from governments, the private sector, and citizens. I will bring all of these partners together to protect human health through GVN and its many partners." Lisa Paulsen, President and CEO of the Entertainment Industry Foundation, which is widely known for its groundbreaking and unprecedented initiatives that galvanize the nation in support of critical healthcare issues, will broaden GVN's reach. "Facilitating collaboration and information-sharing among scientists and doctors can play a huge role in moving research forward. The GVN presents an opportunity to help save so many lives, and I look forward to contributing to its success," said Paulsen.

Romain Murenzi is the Executive Director of the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World in Trieste, Italy, and former Minister of Science and Technology, Rwanda, where he has been a key architect of its country's education, science and technology renaissance after years of civil war and genocide. Dr. Murenzi, who now deals with scientific issues and capacity building for all low- and mid-income nations, said: "The world faces dreadful epidemics almost every year. These epidemics, in fact, trigger severe consequences especially in poorest countries,

where they affect social life, development and economy. However, every menace to mankind can be turned into an opportunity for advancement and progress. This goal can be met through science, technology, innovation and shared knowledge. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that I welcome joining the Global Virus Network Board of Directors and the opportunity to give my contribution to this global undertaking." G. Steven Burrill, Founder and CEO, Burrill & Company, said "The viral disease challenge in this world is expanding unchecked, with global populations on the move and new 'bugs' mutating faster than we can address them." Burrill continued, "My 45 years in working to build some of the leading companies in the world – Pharmasset as an example, where I was chairman for over 7 years from its earliest days to its major successes in Hepatitis C – have provided me with an intimate knowledge of how we can build major companies from great discoveries and bring real solutions to the great healthcare challenge. It's a real pleasure to be a part of this team." Salim Abdool Karim, President of the South African Medical Research Council and Director of CAPRISA (Center for the AIDS Program of Research in South Africa) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal said, "By increasing its reach in Africa, GVN is well-placed to make an impact with innovative solutions to a number of human viral diseases that threaten Africa and beyond." As a clinical infectious diseases epidemiologist, co-leader of the CAPRISA 004 tenofovir gel trial, which demonstrated efficacy of topical antiretroviral microbicides to prevent both HIV and HSV-2 infection, a longstanding leader in training of future virologists and key voice in South Africa on evidence-based policymaking, Dr. Karim will bring his research experience and leadership on how best to impact on emerging and re-emerging viral infections.

Andrew Cheng is Senior Vice President of HIV Therapeutics and Development Operations at Gilead Sciences, Inc., a Bay Area-based biopharmaceutical company focused on developing innovative medications for life-threatening diseases such as HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, respiratory and cardiovascular disease, and cancer. Dr. Cheng said, "I applaud the vision and objectives of the GVN, which are very much in line with Gilead's own mission and heritage in working to address unmet medical needs. Gilead also is a strong supporter of innovative public-private partnerships that aim to prevent and control viral epidemics. I am delighted to support and help guide GVN's important work." "China has high prevalence of viral diseases such as hepatitis B," said Professor Longde Wang, President of the Chinese Preventive Medicine Association. "We have also had the serious SARS attack. We have learned a lot from the response to these diseases," continued Professor Wang. "So the prevention and control of viral diseases are the main tasks for the government. In order to do the work well, we should learn from international experts through the GVN." N. Scott Fine, a Principal at Scarsdale Equities in New York, said "I'm honored to be joining the distinguished members of the GVN and will do whatever I can to support its mission of protecting humanity from viral threats that can wreak enormous harm on civilization itself. I'm proud to be aligned with Dr. Gallo and other globally renowned virologists in the quest for a safer and healthier planet." Nicolas De Santis is President & Secretary General of Gold Mercury International, the London based globalization and strategic vision advisory think tank founded in 1961. De Santis brings his European, corporate and foundation expertise to build GVN both strategically and internationally. "There are few health & scientific collaboration projects that are as global and of the professional scale of the Global

Virus Network. As our planet's population grows exponentially, GVN's role will become central in preventing, protecting and curing present and future generations. GVN will work with key global governance stakeholders including international organizations, governments, foundations, the scientific community, corporations and more in order to achieve its global mission," said De Santis.

Raj Shah, Chairman & CEO of CTIS, Inc. said, "The promise and commitment of having a healthy world by eliminating health disparity can't be achieved without building a solution that deals with virus management." The ten new appointees will join founding Board of Directors members Tim Moynahan (previously served as founding Chair), Mathew Evins, Terry Lierman, Dr. Tony Cernera, along with Dr. Robert Gallo, Dr. Reinhard Kurth of Germany and Dr. William Hall of Ireland, who co-founded GVN.

About Global Virus Network (GVN) The Global Virus Network (GVN) is a non-profit organization comprised of leading medical virologists from Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and other nations. The GVN's mission is to combat emerging pandemic viral threats and current viral killers through international collaborative research, training the next generation of medical virologists, education and advocacy.

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