

GOVERNANCE

BASEL INSTITUTE ON GOVERNANCE

Conference «Access to Life-Saving Medication – Innovative Solutions» | September 7 2006 | UBS Training- and Conference Center Basel

Esperanza Medicines Foundation

Dr Sacha Sidjanski, Head of Funder Relations, Esperanza Medicines Foundation

The Esperanza Medicines Foundation (<http://www.esperanzamedicines.org>), based in Switzerland, is an independent and not-for-profit organisation for the research and development of affordable AIDS Medicines for developing countries. The strategy is based on Natural Products with proven anti HIV/AIDS activity that can be produced in the developing countries themselves, using technologies that are simple and of low cost. The goals of Esperanza are ambitious, namely to bring over the next decade at least one anti-HIV/AIDS therapy and one prevention modality to the patients. This effort has been started by exploring the Natural Product library of Novartis, using standardized tests carried out at the labs of InPheno in Basel, and preliminary results are promising.

Next, the pharmacological properties of these substances need to be characterized, including their bioavailability and toxicity, in order to prepare a data package that will enable us to carry out the first clinical trials. Also, a suitable expression system will have to be generated that can be safely transferred into the setting of a developing country.

It is obvious that these challenges can only be overcome with adequate funding and international networking on a broad scale. Efforts to establish a solid financial basis as well as a network of collaborating institutions are underway.