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Mercachem and Syncom Join Forces to Form Europe's Premier Drug Discovery Contract Research Organization

Nijmegen and Groningen, the Netherlands, 28 August 2017, Mercachem and Syncom, two of the leading European drug discovery Contract Research Organizations (CRO), today announced that the two companies are joining forces effective immediately. The resulting Mercachem-Syncom Group, with more than 300 employees and operations in Nijmegen and Groningen, the Netherlands and Prague, Czech Republic, becomes the premier European mid-sized CRO offering innovative best-in-class chemistry solutions.

Since their inception in 1997 and 1988 respectively, Mercachem and Syncom have established themselves as two of Europe's leading drug discovery CROs with a focus on high-quality chemistry services to large and mid-size pharmaceutical, life sciences and innovative chemistry customers worldwide. Today's merger enables the Mercachem-Syncom Group to broaden its offering of integrated drug discovery services and invest into state-of-the-art knowledge base and facilities to address clients' growing demand for outsourcing solutions. The merger of Mercachem and Syncom is enabled by Gilde Healthcare, the European specialist investor in healthcare together with Dutch pension fund service provider PGGM, as co-investor. The resulting Mercachem-Syncom Group will pursue an active growth strategy aiming for further organic expansion and acquisitions.

Ton Vries, CEO of Syncom, comments: "We are extremely proud to join forces with Mercachem. The pharmaceutical industry is demanding a huge bandwidth of highly complex chemistry solutions. Mercachem and Syncom share the same cultural and scientific background and both organizations have a longstanding track-record in satisfying the growing outsourcing demand of the industry. Combining our forces will further enhance our ability to satisfy our clients by providing more capacity and collective chemistry knowledge."

Eelco Ebbers, Managing Director of Mercachem adds: "Today's merger will take our ability to support our customers and projects with fully integrated drug discovery services to the next level. In Syncom we have found the right partner to form a premier mid-sized CRO, small enough to care and large enough to matter. Together, we are fully equipped to grow the Group towards a broader service offering. For our customers, the Mercachem-Syncom Group will provide flexible and in best-in-class chemistry solutions, from design and synthesis of small molecule hits, to the delivery of first GMP batches of identified clinical candidates."

About the Mercachem-Syncom Group

The Mercachem-Syncom Group has a proven track record of almost 30 years supporting leading pharma and biotechnology companies with innovative and complex medicinal chemistry programs. Starting as a chemistry service provider, the Group has transformed into an integrated drug discovery CRO offering innovative chemistry, medicinal chemistry, library synthesis, early process research services and cGMP manufacturing services to accelerate the drug discovery and development process in a flexible and cost-effective way. Furthermore, the Group has developed independently novel chemical matter in a number of areas, including CDK8 and sumoylation inhibitors (Sumiq Therapeutics) which will be further developed in milestone-based partnerships. The Mercachem-Syncom Group is recognized as a world leader in chiral chemistry with a strong focus on chiral resolution technology. With close to 250 chemists (> 50% PhD) working in state-of-the-art laboratory facilities, the Group serves many pharmaceutical and biotech companies throughout the world and is renowned for its high-quality services and problem-solving capabilities.

More information can be found on the company websites www.mercachem.com and www.syncom.nl

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About Gilde Healthcare

Gilde Healthcare is a specialized European healthcare investor managing two business lines: lower mid-market buy-out funds and venture & growth capital funds. The Gilde Healthcare buy-out funds invest in profitable European healthcare services companies with a focus on the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. The Gilde Healthcare funds focused on venture & growth capital invest in medtech, digital health and therapeutics in Europa and North America. Since 2001 Gilde Healthcare has raised €800 million (\$900 million) for its specialized funds.

More information can be found on the company websites www.gildehealthcare.com

About PGGM

PGGM is a cooperative Dutch pension fund service provider. Institutional clients are offered: asset management, pension fund management, policy advice and management support. On June 30, 2017 PGGM had EUR 206 billion in assets under management. The PGGM cooperative has approximately 725,000 members and is helping them to realize a valuable future. Either alone or together with strategic partners, PGGM develops future solutions by linking together pension, care, housing and work.

More information can be found on the company websites www.pggm.nl

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