Keystone Symposia and MESA to Convene Conference on “The Science of Malaria Eradication” in Merida, Mexico

SILVERTHORNE, CO – January 31, 2014 – Keystone Symposia, in collaboration with MESA (Malaria Eradication Scientific Alliance), is convening its first conference in Mexico – on “The Science of Malaria Eradication” at the Fiesta Americana Hotel in Merida, Yucatan. The four-day conference begins Sunday evening, February 2, 2014 and is part of the Keystone Symposia Global Health Series, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, which has also funded travel awards for investigators from malaria-endemic countries to attend. The conference will gather experts from 37 countries.

Scientific organizers of the meeting are Drs. Pedro Alonso of the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) in Spain, Chetan Chitnis of the International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology in India and Lee Hall of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the US National Institutes of Health. The focus is on examining today’s scientific evidence base and cutting-edge discoveries to help chart the speediest path to end the scourge of malaria. Mexico, like other countries in Latin America and around the globe, is a low malaria-endemic country and is in the “pre-elimination” phase (World Malaria Report 2013).

After Sunday evening’s welcome mixer, the conference will consist of four days of morning and evening plenary sessions as well as a workshop and interactive poster sessions. Presenters will discuss their efforts in a variety of areas, including vaccine initiatives, drug development, health systems research, genetic engineering approaches and surveillance-response for elimination. The four-day conference will conclude on the evening of Thursday, February 6 with a keynote address by Dr. Peter Agre of the Johns Hopkins Malaria Research Institute.

According to lead organizer Dr. Pedro Alonso, “For the first time, a Keystone Symposia meeting is focused on the science of malaria eradication; this is a milestone in the development of the research agenda. Discovery and innovation from the bench to operational research will be captured.”

About Keystone Symposia

Keystone Symposia is a nonprofit organization convening open scientific conferences that was founded as UCLA Symposia in 1972. It has been headquartered in Colorado, USA since 1990.
The organization held its first conference in Latin America in May 2013, in Ouro Preto, Brazil on innate immunity and infectious disease, and another in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on vaccination in October 2013. It will convene 60 conferences in 2014. More information on the malaria conference can be found at www.keystonesymposia.org/14F1 and on the organization and its meetings at www.keystonesymposia.org and www.keystonesymposia.org/meetings.

About MESA – Malaria Eradication Scientific Alliance

The Malaria Eradication Scientific Alliance – MESA was formed in 2012 to advance the science of malaria eradication. Other disease eradication efforts have demonstrated the critical role of research and development. The Malaria Eradication Research Agenda (malERA) laid the foundation for this R&D effort, which MESA builds upon.

MESA’s research portfolio covers four continents and is pertinent to both *P. vivax* and *P. falciparum* malaria. New projects in operational research for interrupting transmission or preventing reintroduction will be funded in 2014.

The Steering Committee is chaired by Pedro Alonso, and the Strategic Advisory Council is chaired by David Brandling-Bennett. The Secretariat is hosted at the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal). MESA is supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Visit www.mesamalaria.org and www.malariaworld.org/blogs/mesa-alliance for more details.

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