



Marcy-l'Etoile, 21 July 2004 – bioMérieux (Euronext : FR0010096479 – BIM) today announced:

Six month report January - June 2004 Sales - in line with expectations

During the first six months to June 2004, bioMérieux achieved sales of Euros 461 million - an increase of 3 per cent compared to the same period in 2003. The strength of the Euro, versus the majority of other currencies and especially the US dollar, continues to affect sales. At constant exchange rates, growth would have been 6.9 per cent. This strong progression, which is in line with the company's expectations, allows us to maintain our growth objective for the full year 2004 of 5-6 per cent, excluding currency impacts.

Six months 2004 Sales

At constant exchange rates, all geographic regions saw favourable growth rates:

| | Q2 2003 (€m) | Q2 2004 (€m) | % change | % change at constant exchange rates | H1 2003 (€m) | H1 2004 (€m) | % change | % change at constant exchange rates |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|--|
| Europe ⁽¹⁾ | 127.2 | 133.3 | 4.8% | 4.9% | 256.7 | 266.8 | 3.9% | 4.5% |
| North America | 61.5 | 60.6 | -1.5% | 4.5% | 122.2 | 120.3 | -1.5% | 8.9% |
| Asia-Pacific | 21.5 | 22.2 | 3.5% | 4.5% | 39.7 | 43.0 | 8.4% | 11.9% |
| Latin America and India | 14.4 | 15.0 | 3.9% | 10.0% | 28.6 | 30.5 | 6.6% | 12.7% |
| TOTAL | 224.6 | 231.1 | 2.9% | 5.0% | 447.2 | 460.6 | 3.0% | 6.9% |

(1) including Middle East and Africa

During the first half 2004, and on a constant currency basis, Europe and North America were the main drivers behind growth, due predominantly to the bacteriology and VIDAS (immunoassays) ranges; the two other regions, Asia-Pacific and Latin America & India, are also seeing strong growth.

Europe saw an increase of 4.5 per cent, up strongly versus the growth achieved to the end of 31 December 2003 (+2.8 per cent). This was due to the recovery observed in Italy and Germany and good performances in Spain and Portugal.

The continuing development of the bacteriology products and the VIDAS range (an increase of 29 per cent, notably on the back of the D-Dimer test and "Physician Office Labs"), enabled North America to post growth of 8.9 per cent. In this region, molecular biology progressed 17 per cent on what is still limited sales volume.

In Asia-Pacific, growth of 11.9 per cent was primarily attributable to the recovery of the Japanese market, which nevertheless remains fragile, and the progress achieved in China.

The first six months saw strong development for bioMérieux in Latin America (+11 per cent), particularly after securing several tender offers. India also achieved good performance (+24 per cent).

The growth rate which was ahead of our forecasts at the end of the first quarter of 2004 is in line with our expectations at 30 June 2004. During March 2004, the company experienced a particularly high level of invoicing of equipment and tender in North America, Asia and Latin America.

At constant exchange rates, Clinical Applications achieved growth of 6.1 per cent in the first half and Industrial Applications growth of 12.3 per cent. This development, which was in line with the company's forecasts, meant that Industrial Applications represented 12.6 per cent of the Group's turnover as at 30 June 2004, versus 12 per cent for the same period in 2003.

| | Q2 2003 (€m) | Q2 2004 (€m) | % change | % change at constant exchange rates | H1 2003 (€m) | H1 2004 (€m) | % change | % change at constant exchange rates |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|--|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|--|
| Clinical Applications | 197.3 | 202.6 | 2.7% | 4.9% | 393.3 | 402.4 | 2.3% | 6.1% |
| Industrial Applications | 27.3 | 28.5 | 4.3% | 6.0% | 53.9 | 58.2 | 8.0% | 12.3% |
| TOTAL | 224.6 | 231.1 | 2.9% | 5.0% | 447.2 | 460.6 | 3.0% | 6.9% |

Growth in Clinical Applications was boosted by the bacteriology and VIDAS ranges as well as molecular biology.

At constant exchange rates, the growth of the strategic products in the Clinical and Industrial Applications ranges was 8 per cent. The decline in other Clinical ranges was less than expected (-1 per cent). bioMérieux has maintained its annual growth objective for 2004 of 5-6%, excluding currency impacts, as the first half of 2003 achieved growth of 4%, whilst the full year saw a development of 5.3% at constant exchange rates.

Recent events

FDA

Audits:

The *Food and Drug Administration* (FDA) undertook two inspections during May 2004:

- For the Durham site, the process which was initiated by the FDA through the issuance of a "Form 483" resulted in the issuing of a "warning letter" restating the points raised during the inspection. At this stage, the consequences for product development at the Durham site are the suspension of applications for new approvals of Class III products, and the suspension of Certificates For Export for products where new or renewed approvals have had to be obtained under the requirements of certain countries. As a reminder, recommendations for corrective actions were submitted by bioMérieux, Inc on 20 May 2004, and are currently being analysed by the FDA. Every means have been taken for implementing these action plans: certain corrective measures have already been taken by the company, while others are being studied with the help of consultants.

- The inspection of the Saint-Louis site undertaken in May 2004 by the FDA is now completed. The company responded in a satisfactory manner to the two issues raised by the FDA, both of which were of a documentary nature.

Approvals:

The company obtained approval for two important tests for its VIDAS range in the US:

- a “510k” relating to Pulmonary Embolism indication for Vidas D-Dimer Exclusion, which allows doctors to use this test in the context of the exclusion of Pulmonary Embolisms. Vidas D-Dimer Exclusion is currently the only test available for this diagnosis in the US market.

- A “Pre-Market Approval” (Class III approval) for VIDAS TPSA, permitting the utilisation of this test as an aid to the diagnosis of prostate cancer, in addition to its application as an aid to the monitoring of patients afflicted by the same disease.

Litigation with Bio-Rad

On 7 July 2004, the District Court of The Hague rejected the action initiated by Bio-Rad and the Pasteur Institute against bioMérieux BV and bioMérieux Benelux BV, seeking to obtain a preliminary injunction against bioMérieux BV and bioMérieux Benelux BV aimed at preventing them from manufacturing and distributing diagnostic kits for the HIV 2 infection on Dutch territory. The Court of The Hague ruled that the matter referred to it could not be adequately decided on in the context of summary proceedings, and would be better addressed in the context of the proceedings pending before the French Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance de Paris).

Litigation with AMC (University of Amsterdam)

bioMérieux BV and the University of Amsterdam have arrived at an ‘in principle’ transactional agreement, which is in the course of being formalised.

Future announcements

bioMérieux will communicate its 2004 first half results on 1 October 2004 and 2004 Q3 sales on 20 October 2004.

About bioMérieux

bioMérieux is a leading international diagnostics group that specialises in the field of *in vitro* diagnostics for clinical and industrial applications. bioMérieux designs, develops, manufactures and markets systems (i.e. reagents, instruments and software) used in:

Clinical applications : the diagnosis of infectious diseases such as hepatitis, HIV, tuberculosis and respiratory illnesses, as well as pathologies such as cardiovascular diseases and cancer, based on the analysis of biological samples (such as blood, saliva or urine); and

Industrial applications : the microbiological analysis of food, environments (such as water and air), surfaces and pharmaceutical and cosmetic products, based on the analysis of product or environmental samples. bioMérieux has pioneered this business and is world leader.

In 2003, eighty two percent of the company's sales are international. The company is present in more than 130 countries through 33 subsidiaries and a large network of distributors, which positions the company well to benefit from the growth potential of the *in vitro* diagnostics market. Some important drivers that underpin this growth are aging populations and age-related illness, illnesses related to life-style and eating habits, the emerging new pathogens, the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, the fight against bio-terrorism, the recognition of the importance of the quality of food products, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

bioMérieux is listed on the Premier Marché of Euronext, Paris (FR0010096479 – BIM).

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Disclaimer

The information, assumptions and estimates that were used to determine these objectives are subject to change or modification due to economic, financial and competitive uncertainties. Furthermore, it is possible that some of the risks described in paragraph 4.11 in the **Document de Base**, registered with the AMF, number I.04-077 on 6 May 2004, (hereafter referred to as the "Document de Base") could have an impact on the bioMérieux's ability to achieve these objectives. Attaining the company's objectives also assumes the success of the strategies as set forth in paragraph 4.1.4 in the Document de Base. Accordingly, the company cannot give any assurance as to whether it will achieve the objectives described in this section, and makes no commitment or undertaking to update or otherwise revise this information.