Adagene Appoints Heinz-Josef Lenz, M.D., FACP to Scientific and Strategic Advisory Board

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- Global oncology expert brings deep insight in colorectal cancer and role of CTLA-4 therapy as a cornerstone for combination immunotherapy -

SAN DIEGO and SUZHOU, China, March 07, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Adagene Inc. ("Adagene") (Nasdaq: ADAG), a company transforming the discovery and development of antibody-based therapies, today announced the appointment of Heinz-Josef Lenz, M.D., FACP, to its Scientific and Strategic Advisory Board (the "SAB").

Dr. Lenz is the Associate Director for Clinical Research and Co-leader of the Translational Science Program at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, part of Keck Medicine of USC and Co-Director of the Center for Cancer Drug Development at USC Norris. He is also Professor of Medicine and Preventive Medicine and the J Terrence Lanni Chair for Cancer Research in the Division of Medical Oncology with Keck School of Medicine of USC.

"Microsatellite stable (MSS) colorectal cancer (CRC) remains one of the cold tumors where effective immunotherapy still remains elusive and I believe anti-CTLA-4 therapy should be part of the solution," said Dr. Lenz. "By enabling CTLA-mediated intratumoral Treg depletion, the masked, anti-CTLA-4 ADG126 (muzastotug) in combination with pembrolizumab has shown compelling results in phase 2 dose expansion in MSS CRC. The safety profile of ADG126 allows higher, more frequent and repeat doses of anti-CTLA-4 in combination with anti-PD-1 therapies, and has the potential to significantly improve longer-term survival benefit for patients with serious unmet medical needs."

An active researcher, Dr. Lenz's National Cancer Institute-funded laboratory is developing novel agents in his preclinical models in GI cancer. As a transformational clinical investigator and translational scientist, Dr. Lenz was the first to lead the first prospective randomized Phase II trials using gene expression from FFPE specimens. He also discovered that primary tumor location of colorectal cancer (CRC) is an independent predictive and prognostic marker, now in the NCCN guidelines. Dr. Lenz accelerates translational and clinical research and provides training and mentoring in the design and implementation of investigator-initiated trials.

Dr. Lenz earned his M.D. degree at the Johannes-Gutenberg Universität in Mainz, Germany. In 1991, he completed his internship, residency, and fellowship training at the Eberhardt Karls Universität in Tübingen, Germany. He obtained special fellowship training at Universität Wien (Austria), George Washington University and Harvard Medical School. He has published over 570 peer reviewed manuscripts with an h-index of 113.

"We share Dr. Lenz' vision that anti-CTLA-4 therapy is an essential solution to bring immunotherapy to cancer patients with cold tumors like MSS CRC," said Peter Luo, Ph.D., Chairman, CEO and President of R&D at Adagene. "His insight and clinical experience as a leading expert in colorectal cancer is of great importance as we develop our SAFEbody® ADG126 for patients worldwide."

For more information about members of the Adagene Scientific and Strategic Advisory Board, visit: https://www.adagene.com/about/key-advisors/

About Adagene
Adagene Inc. (Nasdaq: ADAG) is a platform-driven, clinical-stage biotechnology company committed to transforming the discovery and development of novel antibody-based cancer immunotherapies. Adagene combines computational biology and artificial intelligence to design novel antibodies that address globally unmet patient needs. The company has forged strategic collaborations with reputable global partners that leverage its SAFEbody® precision masking technology in multiple approaches at the vanguard of science.

Powered by its proprietary Dynamic Precision Library (DPL) platform, composed of NEObody™, SAFEbody, and POWERbody™ technologies, Adagene's highly differentiated pipeline features novel immunotherapy programs. The company's SAFEbody technology is designed to address safety and tolerability challenges associated with many antibody therapeutics by using precision masking technology to shield the binding domain of the biologic therapy. Through activation in the tumor microenvironment, this allows for tumor-specific targeting of antibodies in tumor microenvironment, while minimizing on-target off-tumor toxicity in healthy tissues.

Adagene's lead clinical program, ADG126 (muzastotug), is a masked, anti-CTLA-4 SAFEbody that targets a unique epitope of CTLA-4 in regulatory T cells (TREGs) in the tumor microenvironment. ADG126 is currently in phase 1b/2 clinical studies in combination with anti-PD-1 therapy, particularly focused on Metastatic Microsatellite-stable (MSS) Colorectal Cancer (CRC). Validated by ongoing clinical research, the SAFEbody platform can be applied to a wide variety of antibody-based therapeutic modalities, including Fc empowered antibodies, antibody-drug conjugates, and bi/multispecific T-cell engagers.

For more information, please visit: https://investor.adagene.com. Follow Adagene on WeChat, LinkedIn and Twitter.

SAFEbody® is a registered trademark in the United States, China, Australia, Japan, Singapore, and the European Union.

Safe Harbor Statement

This press release contains forward-looking statements, including statements regarding the potential implications of clinical data for patients, and Adagene's advancement of, and anticipated clinical activities, clinical development, regulatory milestones, and commercialization of its product candidates. Actual results may differ materially from those indicated in the forward-looking statements as a result of various important factors, including but not limited to Adagene's ability to demonstrate the safety and efficacy of its drug candidates; the clinical results for its drug candidates, which may not support further development or regulatory approval; the content and timing of decisions made by the relevant regulatory authorities regarding regulatory approval of Adagene's drug candidates; Adagene's ability to achieve commercial success for its drug candidates, if approved; Adagene's ability to obtain and maintain protection of intellectual property for its technology and drugs; Adagene's reliance on third parties to conduct drug development, manufacturing and other services; Adagene's limited operating history and Adagene's ability to obtain additional funding for

operations and to complete the development and commercialization of its drug candidates; Adagene's ability to enter into additional collaboration agreements beyond its existing strategic partnerships or collaborations, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Adagene's clinical development, commercial and other operations, as well as those risks more fully discussed in the "Risk Factors" section in Adagene's filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. All forward-looking statements are based on information currently available to Adagene, and Adagene undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, except as may be required by law.

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