

17 September 2019

NSX and OTCQX Announcement (NSX: BTG)(OTCQX:BNIGF)

## **Beroni USA is Ready to Commercialise a Diagnostic Kit for Detecting Zika, Dengue, Chikungunya and West Nile Viruses Worldwide**

Beroni Group Limited (“Beroni” or the “Company”) entered into an agreement with the Columbia University, New York (“Columbia University”) in March 2018 to provide US\$1 million funding to a research program in the field of CII-ArboViroPlex rRT-PCR Test, a multiplex assay that can simultaneously test, detect and differentiate the Zika virus, all Dengue virus serotypes, Chikungunya virus and West Nile virus. The funding support grants the Company an exclusive option to obtain an exclusive, compensation bearing license to the background patents and inventions to the CII-ArboViroPlex rRT-PCR Test. The US FDA has issued an Emergency Use Authorization for emergency use of this diagnostic kit.

Later in April 2019, Beroni signed an exclusive license agreement with Columbia University whereby Columbia University grants to Beroni and its affiliates, an exclusive license to use the patent to discover, develop, manufacture, make, use, sell, import, export, distribute, rent or lease the CII-ArboViroPlex rRT-PCR Test on a worldwide basis. Columbia University also grants to Beroni Group the right to grant sub-licenses, subject to certain conditions. In consideration of the license granted under this agreement, Beroni shall pay royalties to Columbia University based on net sales of the products made by the Company and its affiliates.

At the end of last year, Beroni has established a new US company, Beroni USA Corporation to focus on developing the new business opportunity. In the last few months, Beroni Group has seconded a few technical and marketing staff to the US company to study the technical aspects of the CII-ArboViroPlex rRT-PCR Test and to draw up a product commercialisation plan. The US team has now reached a stage where it is ready to start commercial production and distribution of the product to authorized laboratories in the USA and other countries.

The key advantage of this diagnostic kit is the ability to detect and differentiate almost instantaneously the four viruses. In an epidemic, early detection is critical for local medical authorities to be able to respond without delay to containing the epidemic.

Zika virus outbreaks had occurred in Africa, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands prior to 2015. In February 2016, the Zika outbreak was so severe in South America and the Caribbean that the World Health Organization (“WHO”) took the rare step of declaring it a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. Although the virus seems to have disappeared in mid-2017, a renowned public health researcher in Brazil warned that the next outbreak is not a matter of if, but when. As of March 2018, CDC estimated there were at least 90 countries and territories with active Zika virus transmissions.

The Zika virus is a flavivirus, part of the same family as yellow fever, West Nile, Chikungunya and dengue fever. But unlike some of those viruses, there is currently no vaccine to prevent Zika or a specific medicine to treat the infection. The testing for Zika virus will usually be done concurrently with, or after excluding, other exotic infections with similar presentations - such as dengue, Chikungunya, malaria, and measles.



According to the WHO, dengue is a leading cause of serious illness and death in south-east Asia. Just like the Zika virus, there is no specific treatment for the virus but early detection and medical care can reduce mortality rate. The WHO recently reported that the number of cases in Cambodia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Laos, Singapore and the Philippines have increased significantly in 2019 compared to 2018 with some countries reporting two to four times more cases than that in 2018.

**About Beroni Group Limited (NSX: BTG) (OTCQX: BNIGF)**

Beroni Group is an international biotechnological company listed on the National Stock Exchange of Australia and on the OTC markets in the USA. It currently has four core businesses -cell therapies, developing new anti-cancer drugs, e-commerce platform for pharmaceutical and healthcare products, and detection & diagnosis of infectious diseases. Beroni Group's overall strategic goal is to become a world's leading enterprise in the biotechnology, life sciences and environmental science industries.

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