

Covenant, Merck Group to Explore Collaboration

Covenant University and Merck Group, a leading science and technology company in healthcare, life science and performance materials, have resolved to explore the feasibility of both organisations teaming up on mutually beneficial endeavours.

The resolution was reached on Tuesday, July 4, 2017, when representatives of Merck Group paid a courtesy visit to the Management of Covenant University.

Mr. Matthias Getrost, Head of Africa, Merck Group, who led the three-man team from the company, said that

Merck has the desire to be part of Covenant University's Vision of becoming one of the top 10 universities in the world by the year 2022. His company, he added, was trying to make bold footprints in Sub-Saharan Africa, part of which is seeking partnership with universities.

Mr. Getrost went on to make a presentation on the profile of Merck Group and its services, which features Healthcare, Life Science and Performance Materials, and the commitment of 1.7 billion Euros into research and development. The company, he added, is involved in different activities across Africa in the areas of Malaria/HIV, Educational Development, Diabetes and Cancer, and Partnership with Seeding Laboratories among others.

Shedding more light on the purpose of the visit, the Head of Research, Merck Group, Mr. Kingsley Udoakpan, who affirmed Merck's long research collaboration with universities, added that the company is strong in different research areas, just as he acknowledged that Covenant University has the infrastructure and brain power. He suggested that both organisations should start something refreshingly new together. "We can bring your university in contact with our researchers," he said.

The Director, Vice-Chancellor's Office, Dr. David Omole, thanked the Merck representatives for what he described as an enlightening presentation. He commended the company for doing a great job in Africa and averred that since Merck helps Africa to solve problems and Covenant is a research university, both organisations can key into each other's activities.

On his part, the Director, Covenant University Centre for Research, Innovation and Discovery (CUCRID), Professor Olawole Obembe, said that the University has partnered with private organisations at different levels and the coming of Merck Group was a welcome development. The level of engagement between both organisations, he stated, would be direct and since Merck has a representative in Nigeria, it's a win-win situation.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Shalom Chinedu, representing the Vice-Chancellor, Covenant University, Professor AAA. Atayero, in his remarks, said that the proposal by Merck Group was a welcome development especially in the areas of chemical supply and training. He said that the University looks forward to partnering with Merck, particularly noting that the University has many active research clusters that can benefit from the partnership.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor urged Merck Group to come up with a good proposal with a view to making the proposed collaboration a reality.

Also at the meeting were Head, Department of Biological Sciences, Professor Adesola Ajayi; Head, Department of Chemical Engineering, Dr. Vincent Efevbokhan; Head, Department of Petroleum Engineering, Dr. Paul Anawe; Leader,



Covenant University Management with Merck Group Officials

Biotechnology Research Cluster, Professor Louis Egbare; Deputy Director, CUCRID, Dr. Obinna Mwinyi, and Dr. Conrad Omonhinmin.

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