INVESTOR AB

Press release

Stockholm, December 9, 1998

Investor AB backs merger between Astra and Zeneca

Investor AB fully supports the proposal for a merger between Astra and Zeneca. With 10.2 percent of the share capital and 12.1 percent of the voting rights, Investor is Astra´s largest owner when it comes to capital as well as votes.

"Our intention is to be an active and lead shareholder also in the new Astra Zeneca. The merger is industrially right for Astra and, thus, also for Investor. Personally, I am convinced that a merged company will have better conditions for positive future development, which is all to the benefit of our shareholders" says Claes Dahlbäck, president and chief executive of Investor.

Bo Berggren, chairman of Astra and deputy chairman of Investor, made the following comment: "In the pharmaceutical industry today, large units are required in order to be able to invest reasonably in research and development, which is important for both Astra and Sweden. Hence, I too am fully convinced that this is a good solution for the future".

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