

Trading Update – Turnover first half year 2009: -3%

Nazareth, Belgium 16 July 2009 (5:45 PM CET) – The consolidated turnover for the first half year was 411.2 million euro (-3%) and 217.6 million euro for the second quarter (-4%).

Turnover per segment

Non-audited management figures (IFRS) in EUR million	Second Quarter			First Half Year			Group share
	2009	2008	evolution	2009	2008	evolution	
Belgium	60.4	56.4	+7%	112.0	102.9	+9%	27%
France	42.3	47.1	-10%	83.3	91.0	-8%	20%
Western Europe	90.2	101.1	-11%	174.9	190.6	-8%	43%
Emerging Markets	24.7	23.0	+7%	41.0	39.1	+5%	10%
Total	217.6	227.6	-4%	411.2	423.6	-3%	100%

General commentary

On the one hand, the recession caused shifts in the consumption pattern of OTC products. Currency exchange differences significantly impacted the turnover of the group as well.

On the other hand, the pressure on the turnover was already partly offset by the introduction of Star Brands in numerous new geographic markets. In addition, innovative projects have been put in place which can positively contribute as of the second half of the year.

Moderate impact on the consumption pattern for OTC products

The sales figures of Omega Pharma confirm that the current economic downturn has a clear, yet moderate impact on the volume sales of OTC products. It is more pronounced in some countries than in others. About a third of European consumers appear to use less or alternative OTC products because of the recession. Obviously, the changed consumer behaviour for OTC products also offers major opportunities, which Omega Pharma is intensively investigating.

Double effect of currency exchange rates

The translation of local turnover figures (mainly in British pound, and in Swedish and Norwegian crowns) to the euro represents 6.5 million euro of the decrease in turnover for the first half year. In addition, currency exchange differences made the products in some countries, including Russia and the Ukraine, more expensive for the local consumers. In specific cases, Omega Pharma has successfully applied an alert commercial policy and maintained or even extended its market share in those countries.

Brief commentary by geographic segment

Belgium – For both the first half year and for the second quarter, the increase in turnover can be split into a light growth of the sales figure for OTC products and a double-digit growth of generic drugs distributed by Omega Pharma in Belgium.

France – The French OTC market in general, and therefore also Omega Pharma France, felt the impact of the economic downturn. In addition, Omega Pharma France was also confronted with an extremely prudent purchase pattern and a continued stock reduction by trade partners.

Western Europe – The evolution of the turnover of Omega Pharma in this region largely reflects the aforementioned general market conditions. If the negative currency impact is excluded, the sales figure for Scandinavia would have grown moderately. The biggest obstacles still occurred mainly in Italy and Spain, and in the United Kingdom where the currency rate of the British pound remains a major factor.

Emerging Markets - The turnover in the emerging markets is mainly related to Central and Eastern Europe, where the local economies are currently under high pressure. In spite of these issues, the half year turnover of Omega Pharma in the Emerging Markets grew 5% (7% in the second quarter). This increase was supported by continuing investments in brand awareness for the Bittner products in Russia and the Ukraine as well as by the successful introduction of the Star Brands, e.g. in Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. The introduction scheme for the second half of the year will focus on Turkey as well as other countries, and also includes the launch of additional product versions in the aforementioned countries.

Prognosis (*)

At the start of the recession, Omega Pharma deployed the initiatives and innovation projects necessary to outperform the weakening OTC market. Based on these innovations, enhanced with the geographic roll-out of the Star Brands, Omega Pharma expects the 2009 turnover to be situated in the vicinity of last year's figure, in spite of the continuing weak macro-economic conditions. The cost reduction plan and the working capital optimization plan have already yielded better than satisfactory results and both plans will be continued consistently.

The current economic downturn reduces short-term visibility. Still, we are convinced that the combination of a continuous growth ambition, total commitment, structured cost savings, and far-reaching innovations makes Omega Pharma fundamentally stronger, and that the results of this approach will already be visible end-2009 and in 2010.

(*) *Disclaimer: This press release contains forward-looking information which is based on current internal estimates and expectations as well as market expectations. Forward-looking statements contain inherent risks and apply exclusively on the date they are made. The actual results may differ substantially from those included in the forward-looking statements. Considering the reduced visibility which is inherent to the current economic environment, differences between expectations and reality may vary more significantly than previously.*

Statement

This Trading Update is edited by the Executive Committee of Omega Pharma, except for the above-mentioned prognosis, which has been validated by the Board of Directors of the Company.

Omega Pharma, a pure OTC play

Since its creation in 1987, Omega Pharma has grown into a multinational group with over 2,000 staff and with operations in almost 40 countries. Since the carve-out of Arseus in October 2007, Omega Pharma is one of the few companies dealing solely in OTC products. Even though approximately 90% of the group turnover is currently generated in Western Europe, Omega Pharma already features in the world-wide Top Twenty ranking in the market for over-the-counter medicines and personal care products

Financial calendar

Thursday 27 August 2009 (5:45 PM CET) Interim financial statement on the first half of 2009

Thursday 15 October 2009 (5:45 PM CET) Trading Update on the third quarter 2009

Thursday 21 January 2010 (5:45 PM CET) Trading Update on the fourth quarter 2009

For more information, please contact

Chris Van Raemdonck, Investor Relations

Chris.Vanraemdonck@omega-pharma.be

Tel: 0032/9/381.03.31

Mobile: 0032/499/58.55.31