

## **Commentary Remarks on “HIV/AIDS in China”**

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To my knowledge, this special issue of *Cell Research* is the first scientific publication that comprehensively addresses the various issues of HIV/AIDS in China. As such, it merits our appreciation and dissemination. The publication comes just in time because China is at a juncture of either gaining control over this epidemic or failing to do so. Without change and action, the estimated number of HIV infected people in China will exceed 10 million within the next five years. However, there are several reasons for us to feel optimistic. First, there is openness about the problem by the Chinese government and impressive seroepidemiological studies are being conducted. Second,

Chinese scientists are increasingly responding to the challenge and it goes without saying that China has significant scientific talent. Third, the epidemic came relatively late in history, at a time when effective drugs are known which combat HIV, and China can take advantage of the unwitting mistakes made in countries that had earlier experiences, both with controlling HIV and with using anti-HIV drugs.

Those of us at the Institute of Human Virology (IHV) will forge collaborations with China to work together against HIV/AIDS. In that regard, we signed an agreement with China CDC in late September of 2005. This collaboration seeks to (1) help Chinese clinicians obtain and use the current anti-HIV drugs properly; (2) increase awareness of new therapeutic approaches and collaborate on developing these new treatments; (3) exchange scientists between China and the IHV; and (4) collaborate on a preventive HIV vaccine. In my view, these efforts will be greatly enhanced by the formation of an Institute of Human Virology in China, that will become the focus of major international cooperation to combat HIV/AIDS.

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