

AVENTIS
Form 425
January 26, 2004

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Filed by Sanofi-Synthélabo
Pursuant to Rule 425 under the United States Securities Act of 1933,
as amended, and deemed filed pursuant to Rule 14d-2(b)(2) of the
United States Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended

Subject Company: Aventis
Commission File No. 001-10378
Date: January 26, 2004

ON JANUARY 26, 2004, TOTAL SA ISSUED THE FOLLOWING PRESS RELEASE:

* * * *

2, place de la Coupole
La Défense 6
92 400 Courbevoie France
Fax : 33 (1) 47 44 68 21

Catherine ENCK
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 37 76

Patricia MARIE
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 45 90

Paul FLOREN
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 45 91

Christine de CHAMPEAUX
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 47 49

Laurence FRANCISCO
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 51 04

Bertille ARON
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 67 12

Isabelle CABROL
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 64 24

Charles-Edouard ANFRAY
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 65 55

Franklin BOITIER
Tel. : 33 (1) 47 44 59 81

TOTAL S.A.
Capital 6 491 182 360 euros
542 051 180 R.C.S. Nanterre

www.total.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Total approves the offer by Sanofi-Synthélabo

Paris, January 26, 2004 - Sanofi-Synthélabo has just announced a public offer for the shares of Aventis. This operation would lead to the creation of the n°1 player in the pharmaceutical industry in Europe and n°3 worldwide.

Total has approved this offer and will approve the capital increase that will be submitted to the general meeting of the shareholders of Sanofi-Synthélabo.

Total is the fourth largest oil and gas company in the world with operations in more than 130 countries. Total's activities cover the whole energy chain of the petroleum industry: exploration, oil and gas production, refining and marketing, trading and power generation. The Group is also a major player in chemicals through its chemicals branch, Atofina. Total has 121,500 employees worldwide. More information can be found on the company's website: www.total.com

Important Information

In connection with the proposed acquisition of Aventis, Sanofi-Synthélabo will file with the United States Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), a registration statement on Form F-4, which will include a preliminary prospectus and related exchange offer materials, to register the Sanofi-Synthélabo ordinary shares (including Sanofi-Synthélabo ordinary shares represented by Sanofi-Synthélabo ADSs) to be issued in exchange for Aventis ordinary shares held by holders located in the United States and for Aventis ADSs held by holders wherever located, as well as a Statement on Schedule TO. Investors and holders of Aventis securities are strongly advised to read the registration statement and the preliminary prospectus, the related exchange offer materials and the final prospectus (when available), the Statement on Schedule TO and any other relevant documents filed with the SEC, as well as any amendments and supplements to those documents, because they will contain important information. Investors and holders of Aventis securities may obtain free copies of the registration statement, the preliminary and final prospectus and related exchange offer materials and the Statement on Schedule TO (when available), as well as other relevant documents filed with the SEC, at the SEC's web site at www.sec.gov <<http://www.sec.gov>> and will receive information at an appropriate time on how to obtain

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transaction-related documents for free from Sanofi-Synthélabo or its duly designated agent. At the appropriate time, Sanofi-Synthélabo will issue an offer prospectus in accordance with German law, which will be the only document applicable in connection with the public offer made by Sanofi-Synthélabo to holders of Aventis ordinary shares located in Germany (the "German Offer"). Any decision to tender Aventis ordinary shares in exchange for Sanofi-Synthélabo ordinary shares under the German Offer must be taken exclusively with regard to the terms and conditions of the German Offer, when it is commenced, as well as with regard to the information included in the offer prospectus which will be issued in Germany.

This communication is for information purposes only. It shall not constitute an offer to purchase or exchange or the solicitation of an offer to sell or exchange any securities of Aventis or an offer to sell or exchange or the solicitation of an offer to buy or exchange any securities of Sanofi-Synthélabo, nor shall there be any sale or exchange of securities in any jurisdiction (including the United States, Germany, Italy and Japan) in which such offer, solicitation or sale or exchange would be unlawful prior to the registration or qualification under the laws of such jurisdiction. The distribution of this communication may, in some countries, be restricted by law or regulation. Accordingly, persons who come into possession of this document should inform themselves of and observe these restrictions. The solicitation of offers to buy Sanofi-Synthélabo ordinary shares (including Sanofi-Synthélabo ordinary shares represented by Sanofi-Synthélabo ADSs) in the United States will only be made pursuant to a prospectus and related offer materials that Sanofi-Synthélabo expects to send to holders of Aventis securities. The Sanofi-Synthélabo ordinary shares (including Sanofi-Synthélabo ordinary shares represented by Sanofi-Synthélabo ADSs) may not be sold, nor may offers to buy be accepted, in the United States prior to the time the registration statement becomes effective. No offering of securities shall be made in the United States except by means of a prospectus meeting the requirements of Section 10 of the United States Securities Act of 1933, as amended.

