

Speech of
DR. JEAN-CLAUDE CHERMANN
Co-Winner of the 1993 King Faisal International Prize
For MEDICINE
(Acquired Immunodeficiency Diseases)

Your Royal Highnesses
Distinguished Guests

It is a great honour for me to have been selected as a winner of the King Faisal International Prize with Dr. Françoise Barré-Sinoussi and Professor Luc Montagnier.

Since the first AIDS case and our first isolation of HIV, the immunodeficiency virus is still spreading and the number of AIDS patients growing. In the year 2000, 90 percent of individuals will be infected through the heterosexual route, with the majority of these occurring during adolescence.

HIV, by killing the lymphocytes, is the only cause of AIDS. By infecting the macrophage, it is responsible for associated diseases such as dementia and pneumonia.

HIV continuously changes from one individual to another and in the same individual according to the progression of the disease. The genomic variability is a real problem for the realization of a universal vaccine against AIDS. Only an original method of research can bypass the diversity of strains and provide a vaccine.

Treatment with anti-HIV molecules should be complemented by an immune restoration using immunomodulator or resistant lymphocyte resulting from gene therapy. That will be the future of my research for a cure or a vaccine.