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Press Release

Tokyo, Japan: Nippon Kayaku Co., Ltd., Tokyo, Japan and MicroChem Corp., Newton, MA USA have announced the recent signing of a Joint Development Agreement for the development of photoimageable epoxy resists for the MEMS and electronic materials marketplace. Nippon Kayaku is a leading supplier of epoxy resins and epoxy acrylate polymers for solder masks and MicroChem is the leading supplier of SU-8 epoxy resists for the MEMS market, as well as, other thick, photoimageable resist applications. The two parties have agreed to a 3 year development program that will leverage Nippon Kayaku's epoxy expertise and MicroChem's resist capabilities to develop new epoxy resists with improved properties and performance capabilities. These new products will be designed for emerging thick resist requirements in MEMS, microfluidics and semiconductor markets.

The companies also announced their intention to form a Joint Venture to market and sell the photoepoxy products in Asia and to distribute MicroChem's products in Japan. The agreement is expected to be signed early this year. The Joint Venture, Kayaku MicroChem Corporation, will start operations shortly thereafter.

Nippon Kayaku Co., Ltd., (NKC) is a diversified chemical manufacturer with products in the pharmaceutical, fine chemicals, and agro & specialty areas with annual sales of \$1 billion. NKC's Functional Products Division is a leading supplier of epoxy resins for semiconductor encapsulation, solder masks, color filter resists and DVD lacquers. MicroChem Corp. (MCC) is a niche photoresist manufacturer and distributor with a strong presence in lift-off photoresist technology and photoimageable polymers for MEMS and other market sectors.

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