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1. Press release dated September 23, 2004 - AEtterna Zentaris to Present at Upcoming Scientific and Investment Conferences

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PRESS RELEASE  
For immediate release

### AETERNA ZENTARIS TO PRESENT AT UPCOMING SCIENTIFIC AND INVESTMENT CONFERENCES

Data on Perifosine at the Strategic Research Institute's 2nd Annual  
Angiogenesis Conference  
Corporate Update at UBS Global Life Sciences Conference

QUEBEC CITY, CANADA, SEPTEMBER 23, 2004 - AEtterna Zentaris Inc. (TSX: AEZ; Nasdaq: AEZS) announced today that Dr. Jurgen Engel, Executive Vice-President, Global Research & Development and Chief Operating Officer of the Company, will make a presentation on perifosine, an oral, first-in-class AKT inhibitor currently in Phase II trials for multiple types of cancer, on Monday, September 27 at 2:45 p.m. ET, during the Strategic Research Institute's 2nd Annual Angiogenesis Conference at the Hyatt Regency Cambridge Hotel in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Furthermore, on Thursday, September 30, Gilles Gagnon, AEtterna Zentaris' President and Chief Executive Officer will present a corporate update at the UBS Global Life Sciences Conference at 2:00 p.m. ET, which will be held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City. A live webcast of the presentation will be available on the Company's website at [www.aeternazentaris.com](http://www.aeternazentaris.com) in the Investors section. A replay of the webcast will be available through October 30, 2004 at the same address.

### ABOUT AETERNA ZENTARIS INC.

AEtterna Zentaris Inc. is a biopharmaceutical company focused in oncology and endocrine therapy. Its extensive portfolio, from drug discovery to marketed products, includes perifosine, an orally-active AKT inhibitor in several Phase II trials for multiple cancers, and cetorelix, an LHRH antagonist already marketed for IN VITRO fertilization under the brand name Cetrotide(R), and also in advanced clinical development for the treatment of uterine myoma, endometriosis and benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH).

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AEterna Zentaris also owns 62% of Atrium Biotechnologies Inc., which develops, distributes and markets active ingredients, specialty fine chemicals, cosmetic and nutritional products for the cosmetics, chemical, pharmaceutical and nutritional industries.

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News releases and additional information about AEterna Zentaris are available on its new Web site [www.aeternazentaris.com](http://www.aeternazentaris.com).

### FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This press release contains forward-looking statements made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the U.S. Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995.

Forward-looking statements involve known and unknown risks and uncertainties, which could cause the Company's actual results to differ materially from those in the forward-looking statements. Such risks and uncertainties include, among others, the availability of funds and resources to pursue R&D projects, the successful and timely completion of clinical studies, the ability of the Company to take advantage of business opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry, uncertainties related to the regulatory process and general changes in economic conditions. Investors should consult the Company's quarterly and annual filings with the Canadian and U.S. securities commissions for additional information on risks and uncertainties relating to the forward-looking statements. Investors are cautioned not to rely on these forward-looking statements. The Company does not undertake to update these forward-looking statements.

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SIGNATURE

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of

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1934, the registrant has duly caused this report to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized.

AETERNA ZENTARIS INC.

DATE: SEPTEMBER 23, 2004

By: /S/MARIO PARADIS

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Mario Paradis  
Senior Finance Director and Corporate Secretary