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PRESS RELEASE

**ETHICS AND GERMLINE MODIFICATION: CCNE CALLS FOR STRONGER
GLOBAL GOVERNANCE**

Following the announcement by Dr Jiankui HE of the birth of twins from embryos whose genome had been modified prior to their transfer into the womb, France's CCNE (National Consultative Ethics Committee for Health and Life Sciences) restates its opposition to the transfer of genetically modified human embryos, as expressed in its contribution to the revision of the Bioethics Act (Position Paper 129 of September 25, 2018). While recognizing the importance of the use of gene editing techniques in fundamental embryo research and the use of these techniques on non-germline cells for therapeutic purposes, CCNE is concerned that a red line has been crossed in this unprecedented birth of genetically modified humans, to a degree that infringes on the fundamental rights and dignity of the human person. CCNE therefore joins with the international scientific, medical, and ethical community in condemning the work of Dr Jiankui HE and the conditions in which it has been brought to public attention.

While numerous barriers have been erected by individual nations (in France, for example, through the Bioethics Act), in Europe and internationally (by the Oviedo Convention, which has been ratified by a number of countries, including France), it is urgent to establish stronger global governance with the capacity to respond to the extremely rapid developments in these technologies. It is also essential that this initiative should involve citizens, through information on the scientific, medical, and ethical issues relating to these matters.