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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH** [SG/SG]; 1 Fusionopolis Way #20-10, Connexis, Singapore 138632 (SG).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **SU, Xiaodi** [CN/SG]; Institute of Materials Research and Engineering, 3 Research Link, Singapore 117602 (SG). **KANJANAWARUT, Rojarek** [TH/SG]; Institute of Materials Research and Engineering, 3 Research Link, Singapore 117602 (SG).

(74) Agent: **SCHIWECK, Wolfram**; **VIERING, JENTSCHURA & PARTNER LLP**, P.O. Box 1088, Rochor Post Office, Rochor Road, Singapore 911833 (SG).

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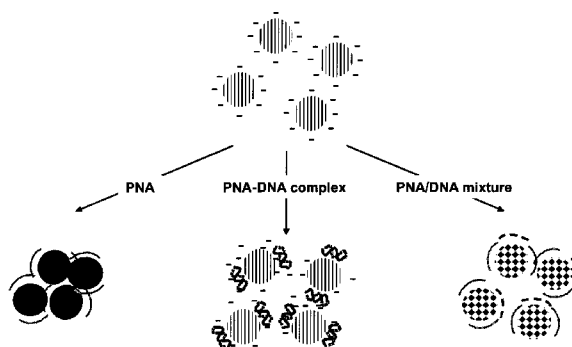
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(54) Title: LABEL-FREE METHOD FOR DETECTING PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF NUCLEIC ACIDS

FIG. 1 (A)



(57) Abstract: The present invention is directed to a method of detecting presence or absence of a target nucleic acid using negatively charged metallic nanoparticles dissolved in a solution. A nucleic acid probe with a substantially neutral net charge is used for detecting the target nucleic acid. The present invention is also directed to a kit including at least one nucleic acid probe with a substantially neutral net charge and at least one type of negatively charged metallic nanoparticles for carrying out the method.