



Rue de Lausanne, 78
CP 116 1211 Geneva 2,
Tel: +41 (0) 22 849 84 05
Fax: +41 (0) 22 849 84 04

access@msf.org
www.msfacecess.org

YAB TUN DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD
PRIME MINISTER
Prime Minister's Office,
Main Block, Perdana Putra Building,
Federal Government Administrative Centre,
62502 PUTRAJAYA.

YB DR. HAJI DZULKEFLY BIN AHMAD
MINISTER OF HEALTH
Ministry of Health,
Aras 13, Blok E7, Kompleks E,
62590 PUTRAJAYA.

YB DATO' SAIFUDDIN NASUTION BIN ISMAIL
Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs
Aras 13, No. 13, Persiaran Perdana,
Presint 2,
62623 PUTRAJAYA.

c.c. DATUK DR. NOOR HISHAM BIN ABDULLAH
Director General of Health
Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia
Aras 12, Blok E7, Kompleks E
Pusat Pentadbiran Kerajaan Persekutuan
62590 Putrajaya

11 February 2019

Malaysia's compulsory licence for sofosbuvir is a positive step for public health and innovation

Dear Prime Minister and Ministers,

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an independent, international medical humanitarian organisation that provides emergency medical assistance to populations in distress in more than 70 countries. To make it feasible to treat patients with quality medicines from more affordable and accessible sources, we rely overwhelmingly on generic medicines.

We are writing to express our support for the government use licence to accelerate the Malaysian Ministry of Health's efforts to scale-up hepatitis C virus (HCV) treatment, enabling procurement of generic sofosbuvir for availability in public hospitals throughout the country.

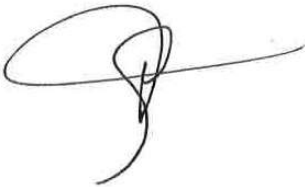
Direct-acting antiviral (DAA) medicines such as sofosbuvir represent a treatment breakthrough for people with chronic HCV, with cure rates of up to 95%, and far fewer side effects than previous treatments. In many of the countries where we work, MSF is able to provide generic DAAs at US\$120 per 12-week treatment course of sofosbuvir and daclatasvir, sourcing these two key HCV medicines from quality-assured generic manufacturers in Egypt and India.

Following the adoption of the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health in 2003, Malaysia became the first country to issue a compulsory licence on a medicine to treat HIV. Similarly, in 2017, it was the first country to issue a government use licence for HCV treatment. These decisions illustrate the Malaysian government's commitment to provide lifesaving medicines to its people.

We would like to express our solidarity and support to the Malaysian government in continuing to reject any pressure from pharmaceutical corporations or their political allies to reverse the government use licence. Such pressure violates the integrity and legitimacy of the system of legal rights and flexibilities created by the TRIPS Agreement, as reaffirmed by the Doha Declaration for WTO members to meet their rights and public health obligations.

As you are aware, the United Nations Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Access to Medicines recognised the problem of access to medicines as a global issue in 2016. As low to high income countries across the globe continue to face significant difficulties with the excessive pricing of medicines by the industry, we commend the Malaysian government's leadership in supporting the innovation and development of more affordable medicines to address the HIV and HCV epidemics.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Els Torrele', with a large loop at the start and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Els Torrele

Executive Director,

MSF Access Campaign