

Commissioner Kyprianou  
DG SanCo  
EU Commission

Copy to  
Dr. Lee Jong-Wook  
Director-General, World Health Organization  
Mr M.N. Khan  
Chairman of the Executive Board of the World Health Organization

Brussels, January 23 2006

Dear Commissioner Kyprianou,

It has come to our attention that in November 2005, the Republic of Kenya submitted to the WHO secretariat a draft resolution on a "Global Framework on Essential Health Research and Development" (R&D) for discussion at the forthcoming 117th session of the WHO Executive Board.

The European Parliament has been and remains concerned about the fact that the vast majority of the developing world's population does not have access to safe and efficient diagnostics, drugs, and vaccines, either because these do not exist or because they are unavailable or unaffordable. Today, according to the WHO, less than 1% of new drugs reaching the market address diseases that primarily afflict the poor, or are new treatments which would have the greatest effect in world healthcare.

We are convinced that the resolution provides an invaluable opportunity for the WHO and its Member States to explore how priorities for essential health research and development can be set. The proposal also identifies as crucial the need to ensure sufficient and sustainable funding for R&D initiatives that address the priority health needs of patients in developing countries.

We therefore welcome this resolution and we ask you to actively support the proposal made by the Kenyan delegation.

We remain committed to increased R&D to ensure the availability and affordability of medicines for populations in developing countries and we hope for your support to bring this issue further.

We look forward to your participation to this process.

Sincerely,

Dorette Corbey, MEP

John Bowis, MEP

Supported by: Satu Hassi, Glenys Kinnock and Vittorio Prodi