

Rue de Lausanne 78
Case postale 116
CH-1211 Genève 21
Tél.: +41 (0)22 849 84 05
Fax: +41 (0)22 849 84 04
access@geneva.msf.org
www.accessmed-msf.org

Mr. Samir A. Khalil
Executive Director HIV Policy & External Affairs

Geneva, 13 July 2005

Dear Mr. Khalil,

MSF began antiretroviral treatment in 2001 and is now treating more than 34,000 patients in 28 countries. Most of these patients receive first-line treatment stavudine or zidovudine, lamivudine and nevirapine or efavirenz, in line with WHO recommendations.

In China, where we treat over 200 patients, efavirenz is needed for those patients who have adverse reactions to nevirapine and in the case of co administration with rifampicine. It is also used for the treatment of children with HIV/AIDS.

According to the information coming from the Chinese State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA), efavirenz syrup (Stocrin®) is not registered while efavirenz 50 mg (Stocrin®) mg is registered but not marketed. Merck announced that efavirenz 50 mg (Stocrin®) has now arrived in China and will most probably be marketed at the 'ex-MSD price', USD \$6.39 (price negotiation is on-going with the government).

By neglecting children living with HIV/AIDS in China, Merck fails to fulfill its commitment of selling "our current HIV/AIDS medicines in the poorest developing countries and those hardest hit by the HIV epidemic, at prices where Merck will not profit from the sales of these medicines", as announced in March 2001.

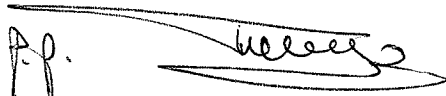
We therefore urge Merck to:

- Register efavirenz 30mg/ml syrup (Stocrin®)
- Market efavirenz 50 mg capsules (Stocrin®) at US\$ 311 per year for both the public and private sector.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in responding to our letter. We are available for a meeting during the HIV Conference in Rio de Janeiro (24-27 July) in case you are attending the event. We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest possible convenience.



Fernando Pascual Martinez
HIV Focal Pharmacist
MSF Campaign for Access to Essential Medicines



Elodie Jambert
Field Pharmacist, China Project