



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Brussels, 1 March 2007

Dear Bernard Pecoul,

I sincerely regret not being present today at the launch of the new antimalarial therapy ASAQ by DNDi and Sanofi-Aventis, as I would have liked to. This is an event that I consider especially important. An event that drives a decisive step forward in the fight against poverty and death caused by "neglected diseases" in Africa and other impoverished countries.

Let me say, first of all, that I very much welcome the fact that the new ASAQ antimalarial fixed-dose combination is born without patent. This means that, for the first time, the health of millions of people has been rated as more important than profits in the creation of a new life-saving drug. The traits of the new therapy ASAQ lead to a remarkable degree of enthusiasm, both in terms of availability and accessibility of the drug.

I therefore would like to offer my deepest congratulations to DNDi and Sanofi/Aventis, as you finally give us the tangible evidence that patents can be skipped in the interest of public health, especially for poor people with no purchasing power. As you know, this is a concern that all human rights organizations and the civil society worldwide have voiced for years, claiming the fundamental people's right of access to essential health tools. This battle is still on, and we are still working on it.

I also consider the innovative partnership between DNDi and Sanofi/Aventis a concrete answer to the Novartis case in India, in which I'm personally engaged in favour of the lawfulness of the generic version of "Gleevec" distribution. Thanks to ASAQ solution, it will be more difficult now for the big pharmaceutical companies to defend the thesis according to which it is not possible to make progress in pharmaceutical innovation, without the patent profit mechanism.

The new global health public good approach pursued by DNDi and Sanofi/Aventis and their results demonstrates that a new way is possible. The largest possible access of population remains the goal and its accomplishment will depend on the cooperation among all actors involved (NGOs, civil society, academia, institutional bodies and enterprises) and from the support they will be able to give to this new approach.

As member and vice-president of the European Parliament I reaffirm my commitment to make sure the European Union, which has given financial support to ASAQ, will continue its efforts in spreading the new treatment to the widest possible segment of the population in need.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luisa Morgantini', written in a cursive style.

Luisa Morgantini
Vice-President of the European Parliament