EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Safety of the Food Chain
Pesticides and Biocides

Head of Unit

Brussels,
SANTE/E3/[redacted]

Dear Mr [redacted],

Subject: **Petition calling on the European Commission to suspend the approval of glyphosate in the EU – "Protect our health, Stop Monsanto"**

Thank you for your letter dated 10th November 2015, addressed to the President of the European Commission, Mr Jean Claude Junker, providing information on the AVAAZ petition directed at the European Commission with regards to glyphosate. The petition is addressed to the Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis, and therefore I have been asked to respond to your letter on behalf of Commissioner Andriukaitis.

In the first instance, I refer to my previous response sent in reply to your e-mail dated 10th November 2015 (entitled "Concerns about glyphosate's approval and public accountability"). Furthermore, with regards to the open letter dated 29th October 2015, sent to Commissioner Andriukaitis on behalf of 47 organisations, I refer to the response dated 25 November 2015.

Please also find annexed to this letter a 'Reply to the Petitioner' which will be published on the Transparency Portal of the European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/petitions-responses/index_en.htm. We also request that you publish this response on your website to ensure that petitioners have access to this information.

I would like to reiterate that concerns of citizens are recognised and taken seriously and that full scrutiny will be given to the outcome of the assessment and peer review before a decision is taken.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

Head of Unit

Mr [redacted]

Email: [redacted]

Commission européenne/Europese Commissie, 1049 Bruxelles/Brussel, BELGIQUE/BELGIË - Tel. +32 22991111
Office: F101 [redacted] - Tel. direct line +32 229-[redacted] - Fax +32 229-[redacted]

EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Safety of the Food Chain
Pesticides and Biocides

Brussels,
SANTE/E3/ [redacted]

Dear Petitioner,

Subject: Reply to the petition "Protect our health, Stop Monsanto"

The Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis, has asked me to reply to the petition entitled "Protect our health, Stop Monsanto".

As part of the evaluation for possible renewal of the approval of glyphosate, a full, comprehensive and transparent assessment of all available data and information was carried out by the Rapporteur Member State (RMS), Germany, and peer reviewed by all other EU Member States and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). A public consultation was carried out on the assessment by the RMS which provided a platform for citizens and other stakeholders to voice their concerns. Furthermore, the European Commission requested EFSA to take into account the assessment of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)[1] during the peer review, to ensure that all relevant information was available for its Conclusion. The peer review process also included detailed expert discussion on the carcinogenic potential of glyphosate, and took epidemiological data into account.

In addition to the unpublished regulatory studies submitted by the applicants in line with legislative requirements, all available and published studies and literature were considered during the peer review. Therefore, more evidence, including key studies that were not considered by IARC, has been taken into account in the EFSA Conclusion. The Conclusion of EFSA[2] and the associated background documents have now been published and are available via the EFSA website.

We understand that there are concerns from citizens about glyphosate and these are taken seriously by the Commission. We must therefore ensure, as we do in all cases for consideration of approval of active substances used as pesticides, that sound science underpins decision making.

[1] http://monographs.iarc.fr/ENG/Monographs/vol112/mono112-09.pdf

[2] EFSA (European Food Safety Authority), 2015. Conclusion on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment of the active substance glyphosate. EFSA Journal 2015;13(11):4302, 107 pp. doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2015.4302

The EU regulatory system for pesticides is extremely robust and ensures that substances undergo a stringent scientific assessment before any decision is taken on whether they can be approved or not. Substances are only approved when it has been demonstrated that under realistic conditions of use there are no unacceptable effects on human or animal health, or the environment. In the case of glyphosate, specific measures were taken to ensure that all evidence was considered by EFSA, and therefore we must ensure that the output of this process is now fully examined.

The Commission is carefully considering the findings presented in the EFSA Conclusion and will take the necessary next steps in compliance with its legal obligations under Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009[3]. A decision to renew or withdraw the approval of glyphosate will be taken in due course.

Yours faithfully,

Head of Unit

[3] Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 concerning the placing of plant protection products on the market and repealing Council Directives 79/117/EEC and 91/414/EEC