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Brussels, 01.07.2015
Ares (2015)

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of 12 June 2015 to President Juncker expressing your concern about alcohol and supporting the need for a new Alcohol Strategy. The President has asked me to reply to you.

First, I fully share your concern about alcohol misuse, which has devastating consequences that concern me as an individual, as a medical doctor and as European Commissioner.

I have taken full note of the European Parliament's Resolution of April calling for a new alcohol strategy, as well as recent discussions with Health Ministers at the Council, and the calls for reinforced EU action to address alcohol which I have received from organisations such as yours.

Second, I believe the European Commission needs to continue to work together with Member States and civil society, across a range of policy areas, to help tackle not only the consequences of alcohol misuse but, more importantly, the reasons which lead to such misuse.

The European Commission intends to find the best way to help Member States in reducing alcohol-related harm and addressing the reasons that lead to alcohol misuse – in the light of the recent discussions in the Parliament and in the Council. The Commission is currently examining all possible options for action to support national authorities in this regard. The Commission has not yet taken a decision concerning future EU action and the extent to which

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cooperation on alcohol could usefully be looked at in a wider context of tackling the key risk factors of chronic diseases.

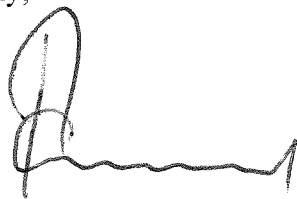
In the meantime, while internal discussions advance, I intend to continue on-going action, such as supporting the Joint Action to reduce alcohol related harm and the Action Plan on binge drinking, within the context of the 2006-2012 Strategy to support Member States in reducing alcohol related harm.

Third, I would like to assure you that the Commission is willing to continue working in close co-operation with NGOs and civil society to address the causes and consequences of alcohol misuse.

Finally, thank you for suggesting a meeting to discuss how to shape a future framework for action on chronic diseases. I would be most pleased to meet you on this issue and invite you to contact my Cabinet to set up a meeting in the near future.

Looking forward to a continuous fruitful co-operation,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized capital 'D' followed by a long, wavy horizontal line that ends in a small vertical stroke.