



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
ENTERPRISE AND INDUSTRY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Tourism, CSR, Consumer Goods and International Regulatory Agreements
Director

Brussels, 07 September 2010

Dear Dr. Miguel Vigeant Gomes,

During his hearing at the European Parliament, Vice-President Tajani committed to launching a new **process on corporate responsibility in the field of pharmaceuticals**. The process will be officially launched at the Belgium Presidency Ministerial Conference *Innovation and Solidarity on Pharmaceuticals*¹ organised on 23 & 24 September while the first projects will be initiated over the autumn.

The process follows up on the experiences of the G10 process and the High Level Pharmaceutical Forum. It will focus on access to medicines after the grant of their marketing authorisation and on corporate social responsibility in the field of pharmaceuticals. Three platforms of discussions will be set up to respond to societal, industrial and global challenges faced in this sector: (1) Ethics and transparency, (2) Access to medicines in the least developed countries with a pilot on Africa and (3) Access to medicines in Europe. Preliminary briefings on the process were shared to the health attachés (4 June 2010) and stakeholders (20 July 2010).

The **platform on access to medicines in Europe** will gather a number of concrete initiatives that could facilitate access to innovative treatments or that could contribute to a responsible environment for access. To support and prepare its work, the Commission will be chairing a **Steering Group on access to medicines in Europe**. The crucial role of the Steering Group will be to generate momentum for the platform and to ensure the effective development of its projects. The Steering Group will be composed of representatives of the national competent authorities responsible for the pricing and reimbursement of pharmaceuticals and representatives of the concerned stakeholders representing public² and private³ interests.

The Steering Group will be organised in close collaboration with on going Presidencies of the EU and its meetings should take place in conjunction to the biannual meetings of the network of pricing and reimbursement authorities. For the Steering Group to play its role we need to have a stable membership to build up good working relationships and understanding.

¹ http://www.health.belgium.be/eportal/Aboutus/eutrio/health/Innovation_and_Solidarity/index.htm?fodnlang=en

² European Patients Forum – EPF, Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs – BEUC, Standing Committee of European Doctors – CPME, Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union – PGEU, European Hospital and Healthcare Federation – HOPE, Association Internationale de la Mutualité – AIM, European Social Insurance Platform – ESIP.

³ European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries & Associations – EFPIA, European Generic medicines Association – EGA, European Self-Medication Industry – AESGP, European Association for Bioindustries – EuropaBio, European Association of Full-Line Wholesalers – GIRP.

The Belgium Presidency Ministerial Conference *Innovation and Solidarity on Pharmaceuticals* will certainly gather most of us in Brussels next month. I would like to take the opportunity of this event to organise the first Steering Group on access to medicines in Europe **in the afternoon of the 24 September** and to invite you to attend or to appoint a representative. The meeting will take place in the **meeting room 12A, Breydel Building, Avenue d'Auderghem, 45, Brussels** from 14.30 to 17.30. This first meeting of the Steering Group will provide an opportunity to discuss on the projects identified and to agree on a work programme. We would be grateful if you could notify your willingness to participate and your availability to [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]@ec.europa.eu)

For the representatives of Member States and of organisations representing public interests – EPF, BEUC, CPME, PGEU, HOPE, AIM, ESIP - and when needed, the European Commission will cover travel expenses as indicated in the documents enclosed.

Further documents for the meeting will follow shortly. I look forward to meeting you in the first meeting of the Steering Committee.



Pedro Ortún

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Encl: Draft agenda of first Steering Group on access to medicines in Europe
Documents for the reimbursement of experts