



To the attention of **Ms Margrethe Vestager**
Executive Vice-President
Ms Mariya Gabriel
Commissioner for Innovation and Research
Ms Stella Kyriakides
Commissioner for Health and Food Safety
European Commission

Brussels, 11 December 2020

Object: on a European pharmaceutical strategy

Dear Commissioner Vestager,
Dear Commissioner Gabriel,
Dear Commissioner Kyriakides

Thanks to the very robust Intellectual Property (IP) framework the European Union is equipped with, we have been able to develop the first effective COVID-19 vaccine in a European country, namely Germany, through the work of a European-based company backed by European venture capitalists. The response of many innovative pharmaceutical and biotech companies has shown their importance for humanity, as they provide swift reactions to new threats such as the current pandemic.

The next pandemic might just be around the corner. Given how many people have suffered and even lost their lives due to COVID-19, and the immense economic toll it already has on Europeans, we need to do everything we can to foster and not stifle innovation in Europe.

This can be achieved by embracing innovation and allow risk-seeking investors such as venture capitalists and companies to benefit from their investments. To this respect, intellectual property rights play an important factor.

The COVID-19 crisis has worsened public and personal finances, reducing people's accessibility to medicines. If we want to increase access to drugs in all parts of Europe by



maintaining our high innovation incentives, we need to focus on creating more prosperity: economic growth is the key driver for allowing more people across the globe to access the cures they need. Loud rhetoric aimed at eroding patent rights is a dangerous saber rattling that might reduce our ability to innovate in the future and find cures for 95% of those known diseases we cannot cure yet.

We need to acknowledge that there are wealth disparities among EU Member States and we cannot have a one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to access to medicines. The EU Commission should focus on maintaining our excellent IP standards and refrain from

intervening in the national rules for pricing and reimbursement decisions. Europe is home to half of the world's top 10 pharmaceutical companies. We should not jeopardize this position.

Kind regards,

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Salvatore DE MEO MEP
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