



Dear Commissioners,

As previously underlined by the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), production and use of chemicals have increased dramatically during the last decades and the insufficient knowledge about their impact on human health and the environment is a cause of grave concern for European medical doctors.

Due to the nature of their work, medical doctors see first hand the risks of harm caused by chemicals.

As the representative of all European medical doctors and thus committed to the prevention of diseases, CPME welcomes the REACH initiative and dialogue.

CPME calls on all political representatives to ensure a strong chemicals policy that will protect children and future generations' well-being and health.

As such, and as a signatory to the 'Paris Appeal'¹ CPME requires:

- 1. The substitution of hazardous chemicals whenever and wherever safer alternatives are available.**
- 2. Access to information and a right to know about chemicals that are hazardous to health.**
- 3. Chemical manufacturers to be made responsible for the harm their chemicals cause.**
- 4. Sufficient test data to be made available for substances produced in low volumes to decide if a chemical is carcinogenic, mutagenic or is toxic to reproduction.**
- 5. Chemicals used in imported articles to have the same requirements as those made in the EU.**
- 6. The adoption of toxicological standards or thresholds to protect people based on the assessment of risks for the most vulnerable populations – children, infants, pregnant mothers etc.**

CPME acknowledges that chemicals have brought enormous benefits to society but reiterates that research also increasingly links many of them to potentially avoidable cancers, allergies and fertility problems.

Commitment to competitiveness in a European market equals also a commitment to improving the health of citizens and patients.

In the forthcoming tri-alogue negotiations CPME calls upon Commissioners, Ministers and Members of Parliament to take into consideration the 6 points above in order to prevent and avoid the ill health of European citizens. CPME urges especially the college of commissioners to support the EP's position on substitution.

Brussels, 20th November 2006

CPME Secretary General, Mrs Tiddens Engwirda

¹The Paris Appeal: signed by many of the worlds leading scientists, noble prize winners, including the previous UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Nobel Prize Laureate François Jacob, as well as over 300 civil society groups and associations. <http://appel.artac.info/anglais.htm>.