

To: Kenneth C. Frazier
Chairman of the Board,
President and Chief Executive Officer
Merck & Co., Inc.

To: Chief Executive Officer
Severin Schwan
Chairman of the board of directors
Dr. Franz B. Humer
F. Hoffmann-La Roche

OPEN LETTER

Treatment activists in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) once again urge Your Company to decrease the prices for pegylated interferons to USD 2000 (two thousand) per 48 weeks of treatment on the territory of the EECA region¹.

This position is based on the following facts: in EECA countries, more than 7 million people live with Hepatitis C; many of them already urgently need treatment. The average cost of a 48-week Hepatitis C therapy with pegylated interferons is USD 15,000 (fifteen thousand). This figure is more than twice as high as the average level of income in the countries, making Hepatitis C treatment inaccessible for most people in need.

If the price for pegylated interferons is decreased to the indicated level, it will enable governments to provide treatment to a large number of people who need it within national treatment programmes. Such programmes already exist in several countries (Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Ukraine); in other countries, the possibility of initiating and developing these programmes is being discussed. Besides, if the price is reduced, it will enable people to buy treatment themselves.

The examples of Egypt and a number of other countries show that significant price reduction is achievable and is a necessary pre-requisite for an effective response to Hepatitis C epidemic. On the eve of the World Hepatitis Day, this position was supported by organizations in many countries of the region, which held public actions aimed at drawing the attention to the problem (Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine).

We hope that our position will be heard and considered when Your Company forms the price for pegylated interferons in EECA in the nearest future, especially given new drugs for Hepatitis C treatment, which will be included in the treatment standards, and the cost of which will be added to the cost of pegylated interferons.

Respectfully,

¹ Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Ukraine, Estonia.

Signatures:

1. Community Advisory Board in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA CAB)
2. International Treatment Preparedness Coalition in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (ITPCru)
3. East Europe and Central Asia Union of PLWH (ECUO)
4. Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN)
5. Eurasian Network Of People Who Use Drugs (ENPUD)
6. The Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM)
7. International HIV/AIDS Alliance in Ukraine
8. European Bureau of AIDS Healthcare Foundation
9. Central Asian Association of PLWH
10. AIDS Foundation East-West
11. All-Russian Network of People Living with HIV, Russia
12. Initiative group "Patients in Control", Russia
13. "E.V.A." Non-Profit Partnership, Russia
14. Regional Non-Governmental Organization Phoenix PLUS, Russia
15. Ukrainian Community Advisory Board (UCAB), Ukraine
16. "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV", Ukraine
17. Center for Social Development and Men's Health Support Foundation menZDRAV, Russia, Ukraine
18. Positive People Armenian Network, Social NGO, Armenia
19. Community Advisory Board, Moldova
20. League of People Living with HIV of Republic of Moldova
21. Non-Governmental Organization "Vitality", Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic
22. Non-Governmental Organization "Copilărie pentru toți" ("Childhood for Everybody"), Moldova
23. Non-Governmental Organization "Association of Organizations in the Field of HIV Infection Prevention and People Living with HIV", Moldova
24. Union of Organizations Working in the Area of HIV Prevention and Harm Reduction, Moldova
25. Association "Youth for the Right to Life", Moldova
26. Non-Governmental Organization "Information Center "Healthy Future", Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic
27. Support for HIV-infected "White Rose", Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic
28. Non-Governmental Organization "AMICUS Union", Ukraine
29. Charitable Organization Club Svitanok, Ukraine
30. Association of Ukrainian Women Affected by HIV "Positive Women", Ukraine
31. Non-Governmental Organization "Impuls", Ukraine
32. Non-Governmental Organization "Istok", Ukraine
33. Charitable Organization "Open Heart", Ukraine
34. Non-Governmental Organization of Patients with Viral Hepatitis "Spark of Hope", Ukraine
35. Club "Maybutnie", Ukraine
36. Charitable Women Organization "We are women", Ukraine
37. Republican Charity Foundation "Light of Crimea", Ukraine
38. Charity Foundation "Open Palms", Ukraine
39. Regional Charity Foundation "Happy Child", Ukraine
40. Project to Help Adults "Helpus", Ukraine
41. Regional Charitable Foundation "Gender Zed", Ukraine
42. Charitable Foundation "Let Your Heart Beat", Ukraine
43. Kryvyi Rih City Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of PLWH"
44. Chernihiv Regional Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV"
45. Kyrovohrad Regional Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV"
46. Nykolaev Regional Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV"
47. Vinnitsa Regional Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV"
48. Crimea Regional Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV"
49. Khmelnytsky Regional Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV"
50. Lugansk Regional Office of "All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV"
51. Patients' Monitoring Project www.pereboi.net.ua, Ukraine
52. Kazakhstan Union of People Living with HIV, Kazakhstan
53. Charitable Foundation "Protecting Children from AIDS", Kazakhstan

54. Non-Governmental Organization AGEP'C (ANTIHEPATITIS'C), Kazakhstan
55. Public Foundation "Master of Joy", Kyrgyzstan
56. Public Foundation "Alternative in Narcology", Kyrgyzstan
57. Association of Harm Reduction Programmes "Partner Network", Kyrgyzstan
58. Open Society Institute, Georgia
59. Non-governmental organization "New Vector", Georgia
60. Public Association "Kyrgyz Indigo", Kyrgyzstan
61. Non-Governmental Organization "Right to Life", Kyrgyzstan
62. Public Foundation "Gender-Vector", Kyrgyzstan
63. Community of People Living with HIV, Uzbekistan
64. Cancer Society, Uzbekistan
65. Non-Governmental Organization "Status Plus", Russia
66. "Center" Trinity ", Pridnestrovian Moldavian Republic
67. Non-Governmental Organization "Pozityvus gyvenimas" ("Positive Life"), Lithuania
68. Non-Governmental Organization "Real World, Real People", Armenia
69. Public Organization to Fight AIDS, Azerbaijan
70. Estonian Network of People Living with HIV, Estonia
71. Non-Governmental Organization "Belarusian community of people living with HIV", Belarus
72. Non-Governmental Organization "Institute of Legal Research and Strategies", Ukraine
73. Association of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual "League", Ukraine
74. Public Foundation "You Are Not Alone", Kazakhstan
75. Kursk Regional Public Organization "Melnitsa" ("The Mill"), Russia
76. Andrey Rylkov Foundation for Health and Social Justice, Russia
77. Fund for Social Development and Health "FOCUS-MEDIA", Russia
78. St. Petersburg Non-Governmental Organization for Medical and Social Programs "Humanitarian Action", Russia
79. Public Organization "Humanitarian project", Russia
80. Regional Non-Governmental Organization "Positive life", Russia
81. Regional Charitable Organization "Chance plus", Russia
82. Timur Islamov Charitable Foundation, Russia
83. Initiative Group of People Living with HIV in Altai Region "Territory of Life", Russia