

Dear Colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to have been invited to speak before you today. Before going any further, let me say a few words about myself. I currently work as a member of the European Parliament, where I sit on the Industry, Research and Energy Committee as well as on the Budget Committee. I am also president of the Committee on Economic Development, Finance and Trade of the Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly. In this capacity, I have a direct interest in questions related to the issues we are discussing today. Moreover, as rapporteur for the Specific Programme implementing Horizon 2020, I very much look forward to listening to the different speakers and to learning about how

we, in the European Union, might improve our contribution to this major challenge.

Main Purpose

In speaking to you today, I should like to consider the *Excellence for Global Health* in the light of the current negotiations concerning Horizon 2020. In this context, I should like to give an overview of H2020 in terms of its key principles and structure before finishing with a brief consideration of the way in which an improved framework programme will impact positively on EDCTP II

Horizon 2020

General Principles

With regard to the state of play of H2020, we are still in the process of negotiating six Horizon 2020 reports as this involves negotiation between the Parliament, Commission and Council. As I see it, the report involves 3 key notions:

~ *Firstly*, the programme involves a trust based funding system. This entails a simpler FP with fewer instruments alongside a radical overhaul of the administration of the FP. Over the years, the framework programmes have grown in scope both in terms of their applications and the size of their budgets. The swelling number of applications for funding has been met with a parallel growth in control mechanisms in an attempt to ensure the proper use of EU funds. The unfortunate result is that it is increasingly difficult – for the different entities that might contribute to the programmes – to find their way through a labyrinth of rules, procedures and

ramifying red tape. It is for this reason that European Institutions have made efforts to replace the current system with one that places greater trust in the applicants as this entails much simpler financial and administrative rules.

~ Secondly, one of the most important features of the new programme is that it aims couple research to innovation and hence to move from initial research to the market or "from research to retail" in a committed manner. Significantly, this is the first framework programme to seek to supervise and fund the whole innovation cycle.

~ Thirdly, the European Commission and European Parliament have proposed a substantial increase of budget for research and innovation. The European Commission has advanced a figure of €80 billion as part of the post- 2013 7-

year budget package. The next step will involve tough negotiations between the main three European Institutions, Parliament, Council and the Commission. While a number of European countries support a figure at the higher end of this spectrum, it is to be hoped that other governments will follow this lead especially those countries with a reputation for academic excellence.

Structure

As for the structure of the new programme, this is certainly much improved by comparison with FP7 and involves a satisfactory balance between the three pillars of :

- * firstly, excellence in science
- * secondly, industrial leadership and
- * finally, societal challenges

The third pillar covers cooperative research projects addressing seven major societal challenges. The first of these is “Health, demographic changes and well-being” and it is here that the relevant sections devoted to combating poverty related diseases are found. Indeed, the sub-section entitled **“Developing new and better preventive vaccines and drugs”**, clearly states that there is a need for more effective preventive vaccines and evidence-based vaccination schemes for an expanded range of diseases, ***including poverty-related diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected diseases***. This supposes a better understanding of disease and disease processes and their consequent epidemics, more predictive and efficient pre-clinical safety assessments and the undertaking of clinical trials and associated studies.

In this pillar, health is recognised as one of the most important societal challenges with, consequently, the single largest budget in this pillar. This currently amounts to a little over € billion out of which sum, Horizon 2020 will directly contribute to the funding of *Global Health*.

However, Horizon 2020 should be more than a simple funding programme. It should lead, by its very nature, to improving the planning and delivery of the solutions that we propose. In this respect, in the different reports that have so far been submitted, the European Parliament have sought to actively encourage the implementation of scientific lead coordination in the health sector. The main objectives are to:

~ improve the exchange of information and promote interaction and synergies on a larger scale,

~ foster greater economic efficiency in terms of the reduced duplication of efforts.

~ and finally, ensure quick and simple processes that will foster rapid innovation in such a way that end users benefit as rapidly as possible.

3) *Conclusions*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

By way of conclusion, let me say a few words about the impact of H2020 on *Global Health*. In the first place, budgetary concerns inevitably remain of prime importance, particularly in the context of the present economic difficulties that Europe is experiencing. It is to be hoped that the fact that health concerns have been granted the largest share of the budget devoted to societal challenges will translate into

continued, sustainable funding for promoting excellence in R&D with particular reference to Global Health.

In the second place, it is with satisfaction that I note that H2020 has been considerably strengthened by comparison with previous initiatives. In particular, it can be observed that the programme covers the whole cycle of innovation; and that a central place has been given to scientific lead approaches. And finally, that a real effort has been made to simplify access to funding.

In this respect, simplification is particularly pertinent in a context in which it is necessary to bring together funding from a number of different budgets to deal with challenges that are often costly.

Against this background it only remains for me to express my sincere hope that the crucial work carried out by the researchers in the health sector will continue in the future with even more resources, vigour and purpose.

Thank you very much