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Dr. Margaret Chan
Director General
World Health Organization
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Dear Dr Chan

LMHI, the world's largest organization of homeopathic medical doctors, learned from a press release dated June 1st that The Voice of Young Science (VoYS) network had sent a letter to the office of Mr. Akpan Etukudo, WHO Division of AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (ATM). Under the title: 'Homeopathy and serious diseases in the developing world: an open letter from early career medics and researchers', the young scientists ask WHO "... to condemn the promotion of homeopathy for treating TB, infant diarrhoea, influenza, malaria and HIV".

Sense about Science, a UK organization acting on behalf of the VoYS, claims that several directors of WHO departments (TB Strategy and Health Systems, HIV/AIDS Department, Global Malaria Programme, Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development) have responded to letters from VoYS saying that current WHO guidelines "do not recommend use of homeopathy." They go on to claim that these same WHO directors of departments have said that there is "no place for homeopathic medicines" for serious diseases such as HIV, TB, and malaria. They have also claimed that your office on 14 August stated that the responses from WHO departments "clearly express the WHO's position".

In a letter to all Health Ministers, Sense about Science has now claimed that WHO has published official advice against homeopathy in this matter. The media published the news as "Homeopathy not a cure, says WHO", "WHO warns against homeopathy use", "WHO Sounds Alarm on Homeopathy".

We are very concerned about this development. Although we know that the amount of evidence as to the efficacy of the homeopathic treatment of HIV/AIDS, malaria, TB, etc., is still limited, and, clearly, much more research is needed, some pilot studies demonstrate that homeopathy can be effective in treating epidemic diseases. In addition, homeopathy does not stand in the way of effective treatment for patients, but rather complements available conventional treatment. Moreover, it is not the



policy of any homeopathic organization in the world to advise patients against the use of conventional medicine, including the treatment of epidemic diseases like HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria. For instance with HIV/AIDS, homeopathic doctors respect the health policy of the country in which they work, providing homeopathic treatment before ARVs are indicated, or to complement ARVs once these are used.

We fully understand that you cannot prevent other organizations or the media from misinterpreting your statements. Still, we would like to inform you about how some organizations such as Sense about Science try to discredit homeopathy by using a well-respected organisation such as the WHO.

It must be clear that the homeopathic medicine is used in an officially and a legally recognized framework by licensed physicians in 17 countries of the world, and it is in current use in more than 80 countries. The homeopathic preparations are medicines. In Europe the HMPWG regrouping all European Medicine Agencies is mandated for harmonization of the registration procedure for homeopathic medicines. Members of the WHO have already participated to some meetings of the HMPWG; published documents are available on the agencies' website <http://www.hma.eu/79.html>.

Some of these documents are making references to European standards and guidelines published by the EMEA and the « DG enterprise » (see Eudralex at the following address: http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/pharmaceuticals/eudralex/eudralex_en.htm. Homeopathic medicines monographs are included in the Official USA and European Pharmacopoeias and also in the French, German, Mexican, Indian, Brazilian and other pharmacopoeias.

Regarding the application of homeopathy and available “Evidence” on this medicine, a document that is updated each year is available on the LMHI website under “Scientific Framework of Homeopathy” (www.lmhi.net).

We would be very pleased to learn about your position on the matter of homeopathic medicines and on the claims made by Sense about Science that WHO has officially published advice against homeopathy.

Yours sincerely

Dr. Ulrich Fischer
President LMHI