MONSANTO

MONSANTO COMPANY
800 NORTH LINDBERGH BLVD
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63167
PHONE: (314) 694-1000
http://www.monsanto.com

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Dear Conference of Presidents,

I am writing to you in response to your letter of invitation to Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant to attend a European Parliament joint public hearing on "The Monsanto papers and Glyphosate" on 11 October 2017. While it is always a privilege to be invited to address members of the European Parliament, it is with regret that neither Mr Grant nor Monsanto will be in a position to attend.

Having carefully considered your invitation, we do not feel that the discussion as proposed is an appropriate forum to consider these issues. That being said, we refute the allegations recently made by anti-agriculture pressure groups that Monsanto unduly influenced scientific research on the safety of glyphosate. Science is always a collaborative process. Monsanto's participation in the various scientific literature reviews recently noted in the media was entirely appropriate and fully disclosed in the acknowledgements sections of the papers, and the papers themselves were the subject of rigorous peer review prior to publication.

Further, the recent media attention focuses solely on literature review papers and not on the underlying Good Laboratory Practice (GLP) regulatory studies that support the registration of glyphosate. Thus, to quote the European Commission in its answer to a Parliamentary Question on 9th August 2017, *"both ECHA[1] and EFSA[2] confirmed that the information contained in the 'Monsanto papers' concerning some scientific reviews, even if true, would not have had an impact on their overall assessment of glyphosate. Scientific reviews have limited weight in the agencies' overall assessment, as EU experts had access to the raw data and produced their own conclusions on the original studies."*

We note in your invitation that "*the purpose of the hearing is to discuss the credibility of scientific studies behind both the decision of US regulatory agencies to authorise Roundup™, as well as conclusions of the EU risk assessment agencies on the issue of Glyphosate*." With respect, it is not the role of the European Parliament to question the credibility of the scientific output of either the independent EU agencies or those in third countries.

We have observed with increasing alarm the politicisation of the EU procedure on the renewal of glyphosate – a procedure which should be strictly scientific but which in many respects has been hijacked by populism. Indeed, a recent statement by ECHA highlighted this concern: "ECHA *is concerned of an attempt to publicly malign the integrity of EU institutions mandated to ensure safe use of chemical substances in the EU.*"

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[1] https://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/22431146/echa_statement_regarding_assessment_of_glyphosate_en.pdf/2d4acbad-37e1-a6cf-7fef-f78711768b75

[2] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/170523-efsa-statement-glyphosate.pdf

Monsanto is reluctant therefore to participate in any forum of which the outcome is likely to further undermine, question or challenge the integrity and independence of the EU scientific assessment procedure and its agencies

In addition, we note that the proposed agenda for the joint hearing of the European Parliament has sought to provide a platform to a number of NGOs and activists from Europe and the US Given the stated scientific aim of the hearing, it is curious that similar opportunities have not been offered to the various third-party scientists who have studied glyphosate and who recently have been publicly attacked by the NGOs now invited to address Parliament

In this light, the joint hearing could be viewed as the latest attempt by those opposed to modern agricultural practices to influence and frustrate the EU scientific and regulatory process to suit their own agenda

However, in keeping with the stated aim of the hearing, we hope that MEPs will also consider why the IARC classification itself is an outlier from the conclusion of every regulatory agency around the world, especially given recent allegations that the Chair of the IARC panel which reviewed glyphosate withheld scientific studies which undermine the outcome of the IARC classification and further that the most expansive review of animal carcinogenicity data was entirely ignored by the IARC working group Glyphosate has successfully passed all regulatory assessments in the EU and globally and probably has been assessed to a greater degree than any active substance to date

Glyphosate meets or exceeds all requirements for full renewal under European law and regulation Notwithstanding the above, we wish you all the best in the organisation of the event

Regards,

Philip W Miller, Ph D
Vice President, Corporate Affairs
Monsanto Company