

Press Release
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CAMPAIGNERS PRESSURISE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO RECOGNISE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST NON-EUROPEAN HERBAL TRADITIONS

Alliance for Natural Health International issues open letter to European Commissioner for Health & Consumers, John Dalli

The Alliance for Natural Health International (ANH-Intl), a group campaigning for the right to natural healthcare worldwide, has today issued an open letter to European Commissioner John Dalli, responsible for the regulation of pharmaceuticals and foods EU-wide. The letter demands immediate action from the European Commission to prevent further erosion of non-European systems of medicine within the EU. This is the result of the implementation of various EU laws, including the controversial directive on 'traditional herbal medicinal products.'

The open letter from Dr Robert Verkerk, executive and scientific director of ANH-Intl, has been issued just 3 days after a forum hosted by Michèlle Rivasi and other Green/European Free Alliance MEPs, on the future of herbal medicine within Europe. Concerned parties grilled the European Commission and European Medicines Agency for over 2 hours, but few left any the wiser. Dr Verkerk explained, *"The Commission's responses were lacklustre and hollow, so we felt we had to push the Commission for more answers, particularly on behalf of users of Chinese and Indian systems of traditional medicine within Europe."*

The European Commission has long argued that the drug registration system offered by the EU herbal directive provides no additional obstacles for products of non-European traditions, as compared with European ones. *"This position is simply untrue. This is amply demonstrated by the 400 or so registrations under the scheme EU-wide for typical Western herbal products, as against zero for authentic products associated with the great Chinese and Indian [Ayurvedic] traditions, used by well over one-third of the world's population,"* added Dr Verkerk.

The Commission is being asked to respond in the wake of mounting pressure from European citizens. Allied campaign groups, namely Défense Médecine Naturelle and Avaaz, have between them submitted petitions from nearly a million European citizens. The petitions cite concerns about the EU herbal directive's discriminatory impact on non-European traditional systems of medicine and voice support for ANH-Intl's proposed legal challenge.

ENDS.

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Notes to the Editor

[Download](#) open letter to Commissioner Dalli

[ANH-Intl report on Greens/EFA forum in European Parliament on 21st June 2011](#)

[About proposed ANH-Intl legal action](#)

About ANH-Intl

www.anhinternational.org

Founded in 2002 by Dr Robert Verkerk, the Alliance for Natural Health International (ANH-Intl) is an international organisation that lobbies and campaigns to help protect and promote natural health across Europe, in the USA and beyond. As an active nongovernmental organisation, it works with a wide group of interests, ranging from consumers, to practitioners, doctors, scientists, lawyers and natural health companies.

ANH-Intl campaigns across a wide range of fields, including freedom of choice in natural healthcare, and to help ensure wider acceptance of natural health modalities by mainstream medicine. It also operates campaigns that aim to restrict mass fluoridation of water supplies and the use of genetically modified foods.

Through its work particularly in Europe and the USA, ANH-Intl seeks to accomplish its mission through its unique application of 'good science' and 'good law'.