Question for written answer E-000757/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea (ALDE)

Subject: Access to treatment for hepatitis C

The Indian Patent Office has accepted the opposition to the patent for sofosbuvir alleging lack of novelty and use of knowledge which is in the public domain. India will be able to benefit from the generic marketing of the treatment at a price of around USD 100, a reduction of USD 900 on the previous price reached by means of an agreement with the company which owns the patent. In the meantime, in Europe, the treatment continues to cost tens of thousands of euros.

In view of the above situation, I ask the Commission:

1. What measures is the Commission prepared to take to promote the strengthening of the negotiating position of Member States in acquiring new direct-acting antivirals?

2. In keeping with Article 2(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights on the right to life, what action is the Commission prepared to take in order to develop Title XIV Article 168 (1), (2) and (3) of the TFEU, taking into account the serious situation of tens of thousands of hepatitis C patients in the EU? Could the promotion of an aggregated purchasing strategy be included on the Commission's agenda?

3. Is the Commission prepared to take action in its areas of competence to facilitate access to more affordable versions of new DAAs such as sofosbuvir?