

ORAL QUESTION H-0954/05
for Question Time at the part-session in November 2005
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Harlem Désir
to the Commission

Subject: Access to medicines with a view to the 2005 Interministerial Conference in Hong Kong

The agreement of 30 August 2005 between WTO member states aims to safeguard poor countries' access to generic medicines. Although the agreement did not amend the TRIPS agreement [Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights], it subjects poor countries to a number of procedures and constraints before they are able to obtain the obligatory licence allowing them to import the medicines that they need.

Parliament will shortly be voting on a regulation to transpose this agreement into European law. There is a need to ensure that the regulation does not add further conditions to the wording of 2003.

But would it not be appropriate, as the specialist NGOs such as Médecins sans Frontières and Oxfam are proposing, to transpose the agreement of 30 August immediately, so as better to evaluate the viability of this solution in practice, in view of the complexity involved in putting it into effect?

Furthermore, what does the Commission propose to do to allow access to second-line medicines, particularly for the treatment of Aids, for which no generic medicine exists at present and whose prices are unaffordable by poor countries?

Tabled: 27.10.2005
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