

Dear Vice-President,
Dear Commissioners,
Madam, Sir,

First, I would like to thank you for your invitation.

This is an excellent initiative, which will, I hope, make it possible to move forward in the construction of a Europe of health and to strengthen our sovereignty.

The health crisis has highlighted our growing dependence on third countries, mainly China and India.

There are several reasons for this: manufacturing difficulties and quality problems, sudden increases in demand, concentration of supply with only two or three suppliers in Asia for many molecules.

But delocalisation of the production of active substances and finished products is the main cause of the weakening of our sovereignty, notably due to low labour costs and less stringent environmental standards.

In the own initiative report on shortages of medicines I proposed several recommendations:

- Drawing up of an exhaustive inventory of the existing and potential industrial fabric.
- Supporting the entire production chain with financial support enabling manufacturers to strengthen their production capacity and develop new ones.
- Introducing regulatory flexibility in times of health crisis in order to facilitate the marketing of medicinal products and their circulation between Member States, while ensuring the highest level of safety.
- Making security of supply a criterion as important as price in public procurement.
- Diversifying the supply so as not to depend on a single production site.
- Building up strategic stocks of essential medicines, and consider the creation of one or more non-profit European pharmaceutical undertakings capable of producing essential medicines that are no longer profitable for manufacturers and so not produced by them anymore.

It is also by diversifying our resources, by relearning how to produce active ingredients and by investing massively in research and innovation, bioeconomy and biotechnologies, that we will regain our sovereignty.

As in the case of vaccines, we must maintain and develop joint purchasing, consultation and harmonisation between Member States and constant exchanges with all stakeholders.

But, we must also learn from our “failures”. We must fight against the return of nationalist reflexes and border closures and against a certain kind of “naivety” in the negotiations.

Thank you for your attention and I look forward to the forthcoming exchanges.