



Miles White
Chairman and CEO
Abbott Laboratories
100, Abbott Park Road
Abbott Park, IL 60064
U.S.A.

Brussels / New York, April 18, 2007

Subject: Abbott / Thailand

Mr. White:

The European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG) and the AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition (ATAC) have witnessed several hostile, unprecedented decisions by Abbott management. The ritonavir price hike in the U.S. in 2003 and the Brazilian price deal in 2005 are two examples of a corporation whose ethical underpinnings were of questionable status.

Abbott's recent decision not to file Aluvia or any other new products in Thailand is a clear indication that the company may not possess an ethical compass. Your arrogant and reactionary response to the Thai government's decision to issue a compulsory license for Aluvia is a gross repudiation of corporate responsibility, and a complete lack of regard for the right of a sovereign nation to fend for the health and well being of its people. Have we not all witnessed the tragic and unforgivable repercussions of this approach when applied to foreign policy matters by certain countries?

Unless your corporate management structure lacks the competence to comprehend response to its actions, Abbott must have anticipated the international disgust that your decision, unmollified by any recent price reduction structures in other countries, would engender. This is so contrary to the productive meetings that EATG has had with your newly designated HIV/HCV research and advocacy team that we are both nonplused and very angry. What kind of partnership could actually be sustained with any company based on repeated violations of basic decency?

A well-established and regarded corporate franchise is well aware of the economic stature and political clout it possesses, and deftly balances corporate and public needs. Recent actions taken by your company suggest that is a description that is no longer applicable to Abbott. The EATG and ATAC applaud Thailand for pursuing a compulsory license for Aluvia. Generic competition, WHO's intervention and activist pressure have compelled your company to now offer a 55% reduction in your tiered pricing for low-and lower-middle income countries. In light of current and often enduring financial barriers to the creation of a sustainable and improving market for your products, it should not have taken such effort to make what any person with average financial acumen would label good corporate sense.

So why has your corporation taken punitive and retaliatory actions against the country of Thailand? It is difficult, if not risible to envision Thailand as an adversary of any consequence to Abbott, considering the crude demonstration that you can, indeed, dictate the terms of the marketplace in that country.

Despite your announcement of a lower price for Aluvia - a clearly needed drug in Thailand and many other countries - you still withhold seven of your products from the Thai market. This is nothing more than brutal sadism masquerading as a corporate strategy to protect profit margins. The world is well aware of the demands and pressures for corporations to pursue profits. Even shortsighted, near-term profit making is considered an acceptable business practice in some sectors. Yet, a special, enduring level of revulsion is reserved for those corporations whose indecent and brutal decisions clearly endanger the health and survival of other human beings.

The Abbott slogan states “a promise for life”. The repercussions of your actions in Thailand betray this corporate identifier as cynical propaganda. Some shareholders may have short memories and greedy pockets, but serious investors aware of the full spectrum of indices that determine a company’s health and investment prospects, as well as patients in need of life-saving medicines, are unlikely to be impressed. We are most definitely not impressed. We no longer trust you. Trust may be extended once again in the future, but be aware it will be hard earned – and verified. We must insist, to the benefit of all parties involved, that you immediately take the following actions.

The EATG and ATAC must witness the immediate registration of Aluvia and other Abbott products in Thailand. Abbott must publish a comprehensive list of all countries eligible for Aluvia at a cost of \$1,000 and \$500 per patient per year. This list must also indicate in which countries the new heat-stable formulation is registered and available, and in which countries the registration is still pending or yet to be started.

These are exceedingly reasonable requests which pose no threat to the financial health of your corporation. Yet, they offer the opportunity to create a very real sense of gratitude in many sectors. Failure to comply, however, will make it impossible for us to maintain our relations with Abbott at the current level.

Sincerely,

European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG)
AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition (ATAC)

CC:

- WHO DG, Dr Margaret Chan
- UNAIDS, Dr Peter Piot
- European AIDS Clinical Society, Dr José Gatel
- Thai AIDS Treatment Action Group (TTAG)
- Thai Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (TNP+)
- Minister of Public Health Thailand, Dr Mongkol na Songkhla