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19 March 2020

Mr. Eric Wiebes, Minister for Economic Affairs (5.1.2e@minizek.nl)

Mr. Paul Blokhuis, State Secretary for Health, Welfare, and Sport (5.1.2e@minvws.nl)
Government of The Netherlands

Subject: URGENT / Supporting the Continued Distribution of Medicines and Fresh Food Products

Dear Minister Wiebes and Secretary Blokhuis,

As the Coronavirus situation has developed and various actions are being taken to keep people safe, I wish to draw your attention to the importance of companies that support the continued distribution of medicines, medical devices, and fresh food. EU regulations require that the temperatures of most medicinal products and many fresh food products be monitored during transport to ensure that they remain safe and efficacious.

Sensitech EMEA B.V. located in Sassenheim provides such monitoring products and services which are categorized as critical components within the supply chain processes of pharmaceutical, biotechnology, and some fresh food companies. What this means as a practical matter is that most of these companies are not permitted, consistent with EU regulations, to ship their pharmaceutical, biotech (including most medicines and vaccines), medical devices (such as heart valves), diagnostic kits, and certain categories of fresh food products if they do not have temperature monitors from Sensitech to include with the shipments.

We have been contacted by many of the largest pharmaceutical companies in The Netherlands and across Europe seeking assurance that Sensitech will be permitted to continue supplying these products in this time of crisis. These pharmaceutical companies are understandably focused on ensuring that they can continue to ship products critical to the health and safety of the general public. We believe our operations are included in the sectors designated by the government as crucial to continue to function in the COVID-19 crisis, specifically,

- Zorg, Jeugdhulp en (Maatschappelijke) Ondersteuning, inclusief productie en transport van medicijnen en medische hulpmiddelen.
- Voedselketen: de voedselketen moet breed worden gezien. Deze bestaat uit supermarkten, de aanlevering van supermarkten, de verwerkende industrie en de transporten van deze industrie maar ook het ophalen van producten bij boeren, het aanleveren van bijvoorbeeld veevoer en andere producten bij boeren, de toegang van arbeiders voor de oogst

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However it is with the needs of the pharmaceutical companies that have contacted us in mind that we write to you to ask your confirmation that our Sassenheim facility will be permitted to continue operations should the government decide it is necessary to temporarily shut down non-essential business operations.

We are of course very concerned about the safety of our employees, and so we have taken a number of actions within our production facility to ensure we have a safe working environment consistent with the recommendations of the government. In particular, we have,

- instructed all employees that do not need to be in our Sassenheim facility to work from home,
- created the recommended physical separation of individuals and teams within the facility,
- provided personal protective equipment and hygienic supplies to those in the facility, and
- increased the frequency and intensity of cleaning within the Sassenheim facility.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I am of course at your entire disposal to speak with you about the points raised above.

Respectfully,

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