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Dear Members of the Standing Committee

Re-approval of Glyphosate

As representatives of the European Crop Protection Industry, we are writing to you regarding the discussion, and possible vote, on the draft implementing regulation for the renewal of the active substance, Glyphosate, to be put to the Standing Committee on 18-19 May.

We are acutely aware of the significant concern that the re-approval of glyphosate has caused, and the resulting political pressure that has been placed on national authorities faced with the decision whether to vote for or against the re-approval of the substance.

We firmly believe that the EU's scientific evaluation carried out to determine the re-approval of glyphosate is robust, and presents no reason for a re-approval of less than 15 years. We understand from copies of the proposal seen by the media that the Commission intends to propose an approval period of 9 years. We see no reason, nor are we aware of any new scientific evidence, that would give the Commission cause to reduce the length of the approval from the 15 years set out in its original proposal to Member States in March. Such a precedent would undermine the process of substance approvals for the future, which form an important part of a farmer's tool box allowing EU farmers to remain competitive in a global market, that is of particular concern.

The non-binding resolution approved by the Parliament in April which, even if it did approve the substance in principle, made proposals which go way beyond what is laid down in the framework Regulation 1107/2009, and worryingly disregarded the assessment of the Rapporteur Member State, Germany and EFSA's conclusion. Not only did it disregard these important elements, it made reference to the opinion of IARC, despite their opinions not being part of the EU decision making process. Despite this, the IARC opinion was in fact reviewed by EFSA and did not prevent them from drawing a positive conclusion on Glyphosate, when considering all available scientific evidence.

Calling the approval system into question in this way – a system approved by the Parliament, Council and Commission - only serves to raise alarm amongst European consumers who this very system is designed to protect.

We trust that in making your decision, you will do so mindful of the significant consequences the decision could have for the credibility of the EU system at a critical moment for European agriculture; a system that ensures safe, sustainable and affordable food for over 500 million European citizens.

We would also take the opportunity to draw your attention to our recent initiative to encourage an open and honest debate on pesticides, answer concerns, and promote the important benefits pesticides bring. Further information can be found at www.ecpa.eu/with-or-without

Yours sincerely

Jean-Charles Bocquet
Director General