

To: Minister of Health, Mr Andreas Ksanthos

CC:

European Health Commissioner, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis
Regional Director WHO-Europe, Mrs Zsuzsanna Jakab
Executive Director UNAIDS, Mr Michel Sidibé
Director of ECDC, Dr. Andrea Ammon
President of European AIDS Clinical Society, Mrs Fiona Mulcahy
Co-chairs of EU HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis and TB Civil Society, Mrs Sini Pasanen & Mr Nikos Dedes
Chair of European AIDS Treatment Group, Mr N. Dedes
General Secretary of Public Health in Greece, Mr I. Baskozos
President of KEELPNO, Dr. T. Rozenberg
President of Hellenic Society for the study and Control of AIDS, Mr. M. Lazanas
Chair of Center of Life, Mr L. Vakerlis
Chair of Positive Voice, Mr N. Dedes
Chair of Praksis, Mr A. Margalias
Executive Director of European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG), Mr Koen Block

Berlin, November 16, 2017

Subject: HIV diagnostics in Greece

Dear **Minister Andreas Xanthos**,

I am contacting you in my position as the Chairperson of AIDS Action Europe, a network of more than 400 AIDS service and community based organisations in the WHO European region, covering 46 countries.

During our visit in Athens in April this year we met the representatives of our member organizations Center for Life, Positive Voice and Praksis, to discuss needs and the situation of civil society and community based organizations in Greece working in the field of HIV/AIDS.

We were informed by the organizations present that there had been stock-outs of HIV diagnostics in the country. Back then the reason for these stock-outs was not clear and we understood that KEELPNO was working on a new transparent way of procurement of diagnostics.

We do understand and support the need for a transparent procurement system but at the same time find it unacceptable that people living with HIV cannot monitor their health status and treatment outcomes and that people with a reactive HIV test cannot receive diagnostic results and cannot receive treatment and care for HIV.

Recently we were also informed that despite of alternative funding and reimbursements schemes that were in place in the summer of this year, there is still no permanent solution to the problem.

According to our Greek member and partner organizations, more than 9.000 samples for further diagnostics have been accumulated in different public diagnostic centres all over the country.

We are very concerned about these developments, as access to testing and counselling, and monitoring diagnostics are core in our joint efforts to reach the UNAIDS 90-90-90 treatment targets.

We urge the Greek Government to address this issue and together with our Greek member organizations are open to constructive dialogue to support finding a permanent and sustainable solution for the current situation.

Yours sincerely,



Anke van Dam,
Chair Steering Committee
AIDS Action Europe