

Attn:

Mgr. et Mgr. Adam Vojtěch, MHA
Health Minister of the Czech Republic
Ministry of Health
Palackého nám. 4
128 01 Praha 2

In Prague 5th May 2020

Dear Mr. Minister

Professional public in virology and immunology of infectious diseases were quite surprised by your message at the press conference on 4th of May 2020 supplemented with following statements of Mrs. deputy Adámková about the decision to invest tens of millions of Czech crowns into a development of a Czech vaccine for the new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, the cause of the current pandemic of COVID-19 illness.

The message itself didn't sound very credible and to a certain degree caused harm to really respectable history of development and production of vaccines for serious infectious diseases of people in former Czechoslovakia (vaccines for poliomyelitis, smallpox, rabies, mumps and measles produced by vanished Institute of sera and vaccines).

The concept of the project for development of an inactivated vaccine for coronavirus for several tens of millions of crowns completely downplays the seriousness of this whole issue and causes suspicion that at the creation of it there were people without competent knowledge and needed experience not only in the area of research and production of vaccines, but very likely also in the area of mechanisms of immunity response with viral infections.

Otherwise we cannot explain the naivety with which the project was introduced at your press conference. For sure it would be very merit worthy if science in our country followed the rich tradition with regards to the development and production of vaccines. In today's world we cannot rely only on limited local experiences and definitely not propose the solution for such complex issue for such ridiculously small amount of money.

Fortunately, on the same day a message from Brussels appeared about a respectable amount of 7,4 billion EUR raised from the European collection for development of an effective vaccine. The Czech Republic should effectively join the European campaign for the development of an effective vaccine with the fact that modern infrastructure built in the Czech Republic from the resources of EU in the last years (e.g. BIOCEV, CEITEC, ÚMTM and other facilities) meet the requirements of „state-of-the-art” for modern biotechnological research of such a vaccine. At the same time by involving these our top facilities we would pay off at least partial commitments towards Europe and regain the needed credit in the area of vaccinology.

Dear Mr. Minister, we hope you listen to our important arguments. We offer you our knowledge and experience from the development of vaccines for infectious diseases of viral origin and our help with formulating a research program in the area of immunoprevention of COVID-19 disease.

With thanks for your attention you give to the issue of protection of population against the new coronavirus and we wish success to your difficult actions.

For the Learned Society of the Czech Republic:

Prof. RNDr. Blanka Říhová, DrSc., chairwoman

Prof. Mgr. Pavel Jungwirth, Ph.D., DSc., 1. deputy chairman

RNDr. Zdeněk Havlas, CSc., 2. deputy chairman

Prof. RNDr. Libor Grubhoffer, CSc., Hon. D.Sc., deputy chairman of III. department of biological-medical sciences

Prof. RNDr. Ivan Hirsch, CSc., member

Prof. RNDr. Julius Lukeš, CSc., member

Doc. RNDr. Jan Konvalinka, CSc., member

Prof. MUDr. Vladimír Vonka, DrSc., member