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LILLY RESEARCH LABORATORIES
Mr Donald G. THERASSE
Vice President
Global Patient Safety and Bioethics
Lilly Corporate Center
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46286
USA

Paris, November 29th 2011

Dear Sir,

Thank you for responding to my request for information on the use of embryonic stem cells in LILLY's research programs.

In your correspondence of 20th October ult., you state that, pending improvements in new technologies, such as induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cells – which are, in actual fact, entirely respectful of the human embryo – "LILLY would consider the use of human embryonic stem cells" in exceptional cases. On the other hand, you state that LILLY uses animal - and human - derived stem cells in cases "where appropriate informed consent and/or approval can be obtained and there is minimal risk of harm to the sample donor". I would draw your attention to the fact this position is inconsistent with practical human embryonic research. To what extent is the human embryo actually capable of expressing "appropriate informed consent and/or approval" concerning research which affects him directly? To what extent is there "minimal risk of harm to the sample donor", when research on a human embryo entails his destruction?

From an ethical perspective, the course taken by LILLY admits the possibility of research which does not wholly respect the integrity and dignity of the human embryo, irrespective of his stage of development.

Consequently, I am directing my financial advisers to no longer invest in LILLY's securities and bonds, either directly or indirectly. I am particularly advising the organizations and directors responsible for managing ethical funds not to do so.

I would willingly reconsider this decision if you were to focus your research exclusively on techniques which respect the integrity of the human embryo, such as the use of cord blood or adult stem cells. Moreover, these techniques already offer wide-ranging prospects for regenerative medicine.

Yours sincerely

Laurent MEESCHAERT