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Em. Prof. Marc Baron Van Montagu
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Brussels, **31. 08. 2017**
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Dear Professor Baron Van Montagu,

Thank you for your letter to president Juncker, Vice-President Timmermans and myself, dated 10 July 2017. Both the President and the Vice-President have asked me to reply on their behalf. In this letter, which you have sent on behalf of the Public Research and Regulation Initiative (PRRI), you share your opinion about the importance of using scientifically sound risk assessments in the field of GMOs and of applying the principles of innovation, Rule of Law and Better Regulation.

I fully share this assessment.

I would like to confirm that I am fully committed to ensuring that the Commission adopts science-based decisions in all areas under my responsibility, ranging from pesticides to GMOs, novel food to additives or contaminants. Since the very beginning of my mandate however, I have been concerned by the level of mistrust expressed by civil society towards science.

I believe scientists have a major role to play in communicating with the public about risk and science to ensure that European citizens benefit from the knowledge and pedagogy of the scientific community. I would therefore urge you, and your colleagues, to participate fully in this important task.

Yours sincerely,