

Ana _____

Brussels, 17th February 2014

Mr President Martin SCHULZ
Rue Wiertz 60
B-1047 Bruxelles

Mr President José Manuel BARROSO
Rue de la Loi 200
B-1049 Bruxelles

Mr President,

After a year of traveling in the corridors of the Bordet Institute, following the hospitalization of my daughter who was suffering from acute myeloid leukaemia, I wish to share with you the distress that affects so many European families devastated by the tragedy of not finding any compatible donor stem cells for treating the illness of their loved ones.

The lack of a donor is a death sentence and points to the impotence of the medical profession to be able to save a life without this magical procedure.

Fortunately, my daughter Cristina was able to find a compatible donor in the United States - a chance in a million. I again thank the Staff Committee of the Commission which was able to help us in April 2013, making a call to donate platelets, see annex.

Having lived myself through this search in anguish, I cannot remain indifferent to the plight of families who are less fortunate than us. Certainly, life has given us a second chance.

Unfortunately, it turns out that the databases are not sufficiently developed due to a lack of public information which distrusts transplants though there is no mutilation to the donor involved. In effect, the donor undergoes no surgery like in the past. With the advancement of medical research, stem cells are taken directly from donor blood.

Today, this drama is affecting more and more families and the survival of their families depends on the universal generosity of men and women who have registered in the European or global database to be active players in the revival of grafts as the donor stem cells produce the "new" blood which replaces the one received at birth but poisoned by acute leukaemia.

I lived through a harrowing human experience with Cristina's disease and I wish to use it to bring to your attention the essential need for your support for bone marrow donation.

Therefore, given your responsibilities as representative of Europe's citizens , I am writing to you to ask you to give us more hope in establishing the " EUROPEAN DAY OF STEM CELL DONATION " where information reaches European citizens enabling them to better understand the impact of their solidarity with fellow citizens.

Maybe we, as European citizens, will remind ourselves in the future that you were the architect of the reliable supply of stem cells to patients today and tomorrow.

Thank you for having read my request and I sincerely hope that you will not stay indifferent to it and enable this initiative to see the light of day under your Presidency.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'Anne', followed by a horizontal line.

Copy: Mr Guy VERHOFSTAD, MEP
Ms Isabelle DURANT, MEP
Ms Viviane REDING, Member of the Commission
Mr Tonio BORG, Member of the Commission
Ms Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, Member of the European Commission
Ms Claire LIPCHITZ, Cancer Support Group