



José Manuel Barroso



Michel Barnier



John Dalli



Antonio Tajani

# THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

FIVE MONTHS AFTER THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S ELECTIONS

in June 2009 and following his reappointment as President of the European Commission in September for a second consecutive five year term, European Commission

President **José Manuel Barroso** unveiled the 'Barroso II' European Commission Designate in November 2009.

*The Beginning  
of a New Era*

BY JOHAN PRÉVOT



**Maire Geoghegan-Quinn**

**Joaquin Almunia**

**Karel De Gucht**

**Herman Van Rompuy**

**Baroness Catherine Ashton**

Among the changes of key portfolios within the Commission, the appointment of Frenchman **Michel Barnier** as Commissioner for Internal Market and Services is probably the most controversial one after fears from other member states that Barnier's policies will not embrace the free economic market model.

Other key appointments relevant to the pharmaceutical industry are the appointment of **John Dalli** (Malta) as Commissioner-Designate for Health and Consumer Policy (Directorate-General (DG) Sanco), DG Industry and Entrepreneurship will now be under the responsibility of **Antonio Tajani** (Italy), **Maire Geoghegan-Quinn** (Ireland) will be in charge of Research, Innovation and Science while **Joaquin Almunia** (Spain) will head DG Competition and **Karel De Gucht** (Belgium) will be responsible for Trade.

Perhaps the most important change for the pharmaceutical industry in the structure of the new European Commission is the move of Unit F2 Pharmaceuticals from DG Industry and Entrepreneurship (previously DG Enterprise & Industry) to DG Sanco although responsibility for Competitiveness in the Pharmaceutical Industry and Biotechnology will remain with Industry and Entre-

preneurship. Consequently, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) will now be under the responsibility of the Health and Consumer Policy portfolio.

Many have welcomed this change and believe that with the responsibility for pharmaceutical and medical devices policies and for the EMA too, the Health and Consumer Policy Commissioner will be better equipped to lead a consistent and coherent approach to public health policy and ensure better protection of patients and safety of medicines throughout the Union. However, doubts have also been raised on whether DG Sanco will be able to find the right balance between public health demands and the huge economic input of the pharmaceutical industry in the European Union's competitiveness.

The change also means that DG Sanco will now take over from DG Industry and Entrepreneurship the task of bringing forward the "pharmaceutical package" which includes a set of proposed regulations and directives on counterfeit medicines, patient information and pharmacovigilance. It is hoped that the move will not further slow down a process which has been proceeding at a much slower pace than it had been anticipated.

Two other significant nominations at

the European level were revealed shortly after the people of Ireland said "yes" to the Lisbon Treaty during a second referendum in October 2009 and the subsequent entry into force of the treaty in December. The appointment of **Herman Van Rompuy** (Belgium) as the first permanent European Union President and **Baroness Catherine Ashton** (UK) as High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Vice President of the European Commission put an end to the constitutional turmoil which had fueled so many debates and discussions in the European Union in the last decade.

Last but not least, it has to be noted that even though the mandate of the current Commission ended on October 31, 2009, it will remain in place until the new College of Commissioners has been approved by the European Parliament and taken office in early 2010. Initially scheduled in late January 2010, the European Parliament's final vote on the full Commission has been delayed due to the unexpected withdrawal of the initial Bulgarian candidate as Commissioner designate for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response. ☪

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