Bayer AG wants to take over Monsanto, the world’s most notorious seed and agrochemical company.

Open letter to the Chairman of the Board of BAYER, Werner Baumann

Dear Mr. Baumann,

In the last issue of FAZ-Sunday you were quoted as saying, “We are aware of Monsanto’s reputation,” and “As I talk to our investors in order to convince them of our venture there will also be an offer for talks to environmental activists and other NGOs.”

As an organization concerned about the possibility and implications of Bayer AG’s bid to take over the Monsanto Corporate Group, we appreciate this invitation for an open dialogue. We would therefore like to ask the following questions of you:

1. Will Bayer AG correct the ongoing damage and long-standing legacy of pollution created by Monsanto after the take over?
2. Is there a danger that Monsanto is trying to evade the range of allegations and lawsuits brought against it, especially the International Monsanto Tribunal in The Hague next October, by being sold? Consequently, might the company have a great interest in changing its name?
3. Could there be a kind of complicity between Bayer AG and the Monsanto Corporate Group in troubled times? We know that there was a joint venture between the two companies in the 1950s and 60s to develop Agent Orange?
4. As indicated in the press, the planned merger of Bayer AG and the Monsanto Corporate Group will be very profitable for Monsanto’s management. Will there be similar profits for Bayer AG’s management?
5. Could the real reason for the merger be to bypass TTIP negotiations - which are stalled for the moment - and so be able to sell controversial Monsanto products through the backdoor on the European market?
6. Will Bayer AG continue to undertake research and production in all of Monsanto’s main sectors (including pesticides herbicides and gene technology)? And will Bayer AG continue to use the justification that these products are necessary to save humanity from food insecurity and climate change?

Again, we appreciate your openness to dialogue, and look forward to hearing back from you with a proposal for when we can meet to discuss these questions and your answers in person.

Yours sincerely,

Hans Rudolf Herren (Member of the Steering Committee of the Monsanto Tribunal)
Renate Künast (Ambassadress of the Monsanto Tribunal)
Marie-Monique Robin (Patroness and Member of the Steering Committee of the Monsanto Tribunal)
Dr. Vandana Shiva (Member of the Steering Committee of the Monsanto Tribunal)
Hans Rudolf Herren (Member of the Steering Committee of the Monsanto Tribunal)