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Prof. Ing. Jiri Drahos, DrSc., dr.h.c.
The Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic
Narodni 3
117 20 Prague 1

Dear Professor Drahos,

I am sorry to hear from my Czech scientific colleagues, as well as from a recent article in *Nature*, that the Czech government plans to halve (or more) the funding of the major pillar of Czech scientific research, The Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (AS CR), over the next three years. This is a mistake.

Scientists working at this institution have been producing important results: an example in my own field has been the cell cycle inhibitor, roscovitine. I expect further achievements to be made, for I know that Czech science has experienced a notable boost in recent years. The AS CR employs a number of world-class scientists - for example all four Czech members of the European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), which promotes excellence in molecular life sciences and recognizes leading researchers, work at the Institute of Molecular Genetics of the AS CR. Many leading Czech scientists who are currently abroad collaborate with laboratories of the AS CR.

It is very disappointing that such severe constraints are planned for the activities of the Czech Academy of Sciences, because sustained long-term expansion of the economy requires a strong basis in scientific research, and continuity of funding is extremely important, particularly for the nourishment of young talent.

In my opinion, curtailing the activities of the Academy of Sciences is against the interests of the Czech Republic.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Hunt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tim Hunt

Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, 2001
Chairman of the EMBO Council