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PRESS RELEASE

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CALL TO CZECH POLITICIANS: CZECH SCIENTISTS ARE READY TO HELP. NOW YOU MUST, TOO.

Prague, 18 March 2020 – In the past few days Charles University, together with the institutes of the AS CR and other scientific workplaces in the country, has been involved in discussions with the Czech government and offered the instruments in its laboratories and its professional expertise to ensure the more effective testing of the population for the SARS2 coronavirus. The official proposal was sent in the night from 16-17 March. CU stresses that these efforts cannot be effective, and it will not be possible to implement them on time, without rapid cooperation with the Task Force of the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Health.

However, one thing is lacking in order to put all these measures into practice: we require permits from state bodies and cooperation at the level of the Government of the Czech Republic and the Task Force.

The head coordinator of activities is Jan Konvalinka, Vice-Rector of CU for Research and leading researcher at the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry AS CR, who discussed the matter with Deputy Minister of Health, Jan Prymula. Furthermore, Rector Tomáš Zima is currently involved in negotiations with state bodies for the expedited certification of certain workplaces so that they are usable for patient diagnosis, but so far without any definite result. CU values the activity and determination shown by hundreds of its students and academic staff, but stresses that these efforts will be negated without cooperation and rapid action on the part of state bodies. The mass testing of the populace for coronavirus infection, which has been the key to managing the epidemic in a number of countries, cannot be achieved through amateurish improvisation, and necessarily requires central management and cooperation.

Despite the difficulty of the current situation, the management of CU therefore calls on state institutions to start taking steps that can rapidly move us towards improving the situation. Although quarantine has been introduced and a large number of correct decisions have been taken, the situation will not improve without the introduction of larger-scale testing. Researchers are ready, and the students are showing solidarity and have been ready to work from the first moment of the crisis.

All that is required is the taking of clear, rapid decisions and long-term, coherent, centrally coordinated work.

CORRECTNESS CHECKED BY:

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