



President Ursula von der Leyen
Rue de la Loi 200,
1049 Bruxelles
8 April 2021

Dear President,

We are now one year into the pandemic and while progress on vaccine development has been impressive, much more needs to be done to ensure we end the pandemic and kickstart the global recovery. The emergence of new strains is putting progress at risk. The longer the virus is able to travel the world, the greater the risk of mutations and the greater the risk that the vaccines we do have will become ineffective. This is why global access is essential to end the pandemic for everyone everywhere. Global solidarity isn't just the right thing to do. It's the fastest and most effective way to contain the pandemic, save lives, protect health care systems, and restore economies.

In view of the Global Health Summit on 21 May, over one year since the ACT Accelerator (ACT-A) was created, we wanted to share with you our recommendations to ensure we take the fight against COVID to another level. In the lead up to or at the Global Health Summit, the Commission should:

- **Contribute its fair share to fully fund ACT-A by pledging another €1.2 billion in grants to ACT-A.** The European Commission has played a leadership role in setting up ACT-A and has led by example by pledging €500 million to COVAX alongside €600 million in loan guarantees. But ACT-A requires another \$22.1 billion this year to deliver its mission and ensure global equitable access to a full set of COVID tools.
- **Ensure a fair distribution between the ACT-A pillars by making substantial contributions to the Diagnostics and Therapeutics pillars and the Health System Connector that are largely underfunded.** We were pleased to hear Commissioner Kyriakides' remarks on the importance of investing in diagnostics and therapeutics at the 5th ACT-A Facilitation Council. We hope the EC will now match these words with investment.
 - Diagnostics are critical to outbreak and pandemic preparedness and response for two key reasons. First, diagnostics are the eyes and ears of a global pandemic response. Testing is the only way to identify flare ups and hotspots so that appropriate containment measures can be implemented. Second, sequencing based diagnostics allow an understanding and analysis of variants. The rapid emergence of the novel variants clearly demonstrates the need for continued, robust and widespread surveillance, to ensure that other novel mutations are identified as early as possible. **The Diagnostics pillar faces a funding gap of \$8.7 billion over the course of 2021.**



- While vaccines can and hopefully will ultimately help the world achieve herd immunity, they will not be able to prevent every case, and where infections do occur, treatment to reduce severity and speed recovery are sorely needed. The world does not currently have a fully effective treatment for COVID. Oxygen is still one of the only treatments available for COVID-19 in low-resource settings, and access must be urgently improved. **The therapeutics financing gap is estimated at \$3.2 billion over the course of 2021.**
- Health systems must be urgently protected and strengthened to facilitate the rapid uptake of COVID tools as well as to prepare for future pandemic threats. The Health Systems Connector (HSC) also aims to ensure access to sufficient supplies of essential personal protective equipment (PPE) in Low- and Lower-Middle Income Countries (LMICs) to protect frontline health care workers and to enhance the ability of health systems to save lives. **The HSC financing gap is estimated at \$7.3 billion over the course of 2021.**

On vaccine donations, we understand the sensitivity around vaccine supply at the moment - however as European politicians have been saying consistently, without global action we will be in a perpetual pandemic. We therefore need to organise now for a portion of doses secured by rich countries to be deployed in LMICs as soon as possible to beat the global pandemic. For that reason, we urge that the detailed planning on donating all excess doses must be accelerated, working closely with COVAX, with support given to countries to make sure the logistical and human capacity exists to distribute and administer vaccines once they arrive in recipient countries.

The Commission has shown tremendous leadership in the global fight against COVID. We hope to be able to count on it again as we need to take the fight to another level. We would love to work with your team to discuss our recommendations and to amplify any commitments you are willing to make in the near future.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Warmly,

[REDACTED] Pandemic Action Network
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 [REDACTED], The ONE Campaign
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CC: Commissioner Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety