



President Ursula von der Leyen
European Commission
Rue de la Loi
Brussels

Dear President von der Leyen,

Thank you again for your strong leadership and commitment to an equitable, global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission is clearly leading the way to ensure no one is left behind.

At the Special European Council on July 17-18, I am writing to ask you to ensure that the global COVID-19 response and pandemic preparedness and prevention efforts are protected and increased. It is crucial that the spirit of both May 4th and June 27th is reflected in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27 and the 'Next Generation EU' recovery fund and that they prioritise the global COVID-19 response and invest emergency funds in a way that helps prevent future pandemics.

COVID-19 doesn't recognise borders. Until we get rid of this disease globally everyone - including EU citizens - will be at risk. It is also essential that the world's response to COVID-19 leaves a legacy for the future. Once and for all, we must break the deadly and costly cycle of panic and neglect that has left the world so vulnerable to pandemic threats.

Therefore, at the upcoming European Council meeting, we are calling on you to ensure that European leaders:

- **Protect vital support to the global response to COVID-19 under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) and under the Humanitarian Aid Instrument (Heading VI)**, including to ensure universal and affordable access to treatment, testing and any future vaccine. The African CDC and other regional humanitarian hubs should also be supported to ensure frontline access to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other vital supplies in vulnerable countries with the greatest need. Strong financial support to the WHO should be prioritised for more effective pandemic preparedness and response.
- **Protect crucial pandemic preparedness and prevention funding, including the new EU4Health and RescEU under Heading V**, to ensure we don't repeat the errors of the past and we have the capacity to detect, prevent and respond to future outbreaks before they become deadly and costly pandemics.
- **Commit in the Council Conclusions that EU leaders will support the adoption of a global plan** to strengthen international health security architecture, ensure that every country has the capacity to detect, prevent and respond to future outbreaks before they become deadly and costly pandemics and signal Europe's willingness to invest billions today to save trillions tomorrow.
- **Protect flexible emergency tools, in particular the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve**, to enable rapid response to crises both within and outside the EU.
- **Use the EU's flexibility instruments, including through replenishing funds in the current MFF, to help close the funding gap to meet the ACT-Accelerator needs.** The overall costings for the ACT-Accelerator [published](#) on June 26 are set at \$31.3bn for the next 12 months, with an urgent funding need of \$13.7bn which the world needs to raise as soon as possible for crucial upstream investments to rid the world of COVID-19. It is vital to provide the ACT-Accelerator the funding it needs to secure urgent COVID-19 tools - vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics -, and crucially get them to every corner of the world, regardless of personal or national wealth.

- **Ensure that all spending in the next MFF is subject to an impact assessment and resilience test** to ensure that where possible it helps strengthen our systems to protect against future pandemics. The EU needs a resilience budget that can prepare us for future crises. This resilience process should be an integral part of the better regulation agenda and a key theme of the next MFF.

Finally, we want to thank you for **leading by example by covering your face in public to protect those around you. We call on you to encourage all EU leaders to wear a mask and call on their citizens to follow suit** until the pandemic is over. Face mask use results in a large reduction in risk of infection. Giving the advice to wear a mask or homemade cloth face covering costs nothing; not doing so costs lives.

COVID-19 is putting progress towards the SDGs in peril. the world must act fast to rid the world of the pandemic, deliver equitable access to innovations, and prevent future pandemics. We hope the European Commission continues leading the way.

Thank you for your support on these crucial matters.



Pandemic Action Network

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