

18 May 2021

Dear President von der Leyen,

The scenes emerging from India are a harrowing reminder that unequal distribution of vaccines puts everyone at risk – more contagious forms of the virus are already evolving, increasing the risk of a new mutation that resists current vaccines. Global access to vaccines is the fastest way to end the pandemic but if rich countries monopolise supply and only vaccinate themselves, [twice as many people could die](#) – and the costs could stack up to an [additional \\$9 trillion](#). As of May 2021, just 0.3% of COVID-19 vaccines had been administered in low-income countries and COVID-19 deaths in low and lower-middle income countries now [account for 30.7% of global deaths](#), compared to 9.3% a month ago.

**The EU and its Member States must seize the opportunity of the Global Health Summit on May 21 and the 24-25 May European Council meeting by:**

- **Developing a strategy to reach global immunity as soon as possible, raising the level of ambition and offering the political leadership needed to deliver vaccines across the world.** The EU and Member States should coordinate globally so that all efforts to deliver COVID-19 vaccines are mapped, are mutually reinforcing and duplication is avoided. This strategy should include a comprehensive costing and analysis to identify gaps in supply, procurement, and resources needed in-country for the delivery for vaccines, treatments and tests.
- **Immediately contributing to the [call](#) for High income countries to share 1 billion doses by September, and 2 billion as soon as possible, sharing surplus doses via or in coordination with COVAX:** Member States will have at least 690 million doses more than they need to vaccinate 100% of their populations, and in many EU Member States the supply of COVID-19 vaccines will soon [outstrip demand](#). Several Member States have stepped up with commitments to share doses, other leaders should urgently follow in their footsteps. Unearmarked doses should be donated immediately, in parallel with national vaccination rollouts, or when countries have vaccinated 20% of their populations at the latest. Moving forward, the EU should avoid purchasing more doses than necessary to fully cover its population, and should make its own contracts conditional upon pharmaceuticals making deals with COVAX at not-for-profit pricing.
- **Contributing to fully funding the \$18.5 billion gap of the ACT-Accelerator in 2021 and ensuring a fair distribution between the Therapeutics, Diagnostics and Vaccines Pillars, as well as the Health System Connector.** The European Commission should contribute at least an additional €1.2 billion to meet its fair share.
- **Supporting all means necessary to increase global supply of COVID-19 tools.** The EU and Member States should follow the leadership of all African states, the United States, and the World Health Organization, and support a temporary waiver of COVID-19 intellectual property rights. A TRIPS waiver could create the right conditions to increase supply to COVID-19 tools in the medium-term, alongside additional licensing, technology transfers, and the elimination of trade-related barriers such as export bans. In parallel, the EU should launch an initiative to increase manufacturing capacity in LICs and LMICs, helping to bring private investors on board, and support the WHO's mRNA Tech-Transfer Hub. It is imperative that governments and industry use every tool in their toolbox to dismantle the barriers that delay truly global access to COVID-19 vaccines, tests, and medicines.

We hope to be able to count on the European Union's leadership to take the fight against COVID-19 to the next level. We are keen 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,

