

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

24 June 2020

Dear President Von der Leyen,

**Your global leadership on 27<sup>th</sup> and beyond**

I am writing from the Pandemic Action Network, founded on 22 April 2020 with a mandate to halt the cycle of 'panic and neglect' that often accompanies disasters. The Pandemic Action Network has over 40 partner organisations including civil society groups, the private sector, Foundations, scientists and more.

We thank you warmly for your incredible leadership to make sure the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic is equitable for people living in LMICs and vulnerable groups everywhere - your consistent message that no one should be left behind is welcome. We are working closely with the brilliant team at Global Citizen to coordinate advocacy and campaign activities with civil society groups and others to make Saturday's pledging summit the success it needs to be.

When crises hit, it is normal to see a flurry of political activity and investment. Often, however, when a crisis dissipates, neglect and complacency often start to creep in. We want to work with you to make sure that this time, this cycle of panic and neglect is broken once and for all – not just in the EU, but across the world. Also, with the ACT Accelerator costings being released on Friday, it is even more vital that this ACT/A funding, while vital, is correctly framed as only the first step towards making sure this never happens again. Your work on the MFF and the European Recovery Plan has been excellent, and we would ask for your leadership beyond Saturday to make sure the rest of the world can succeed in fighting this pandemic for good with measures as ambitious as those as you have initiated for the EU. We therefore ask you to take the following points into account particularly within the remarks you make on the ACT/A costing paper and Saturday's event and pledge:

- **Global costed plan.** The world needs the global, costed plan that will provide a roadmap out of COVID – not just temporarily, but for good. This will take a critical mass of leaders coming together to state that they are on board to develop and raise funds in order to prevent and prepare for future crises. This kind of initiative could be led by a group of leaders, including you, Madam President, as well as [REDACTED] have also spoken about their shared desire to put pandemic preparedness and prevention on the agenda. As the pledging moment on Saturday closes we would ask that you, in concert with as many key multilateral leaders as possible, signal your intent to work on this wider challenge to create a Global Compact that can help the global community come together to rid the world of pandemics for good. We would be happy to work with you on how we can work on the forthcoming meetings of the G20, the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board and UNGA in September to develop this further.
- **EU Vaccines strategy:** The EU vaccines strategy you set out should expand globally as pledged at the launch. The "buyers' group" should see richer countries negotiate additional tranches of vaccines that will cover citizens in MICs, LICs and fragile states. A norm can be set whereby high income countries reserve an additional amount of vaccines equivalent to their own populations (doubling their commitment) in order to accelerate coverage across the world. It's vital that any vaccine would then be distributed in a way that prioritises those who need it most, based on previously agreed criteria. All other Covid-19 response tools and initiatives, including ACT/A, should

also be truly global and equitable with developing countries having a place as equal partners. As you have said, COVID-19 anywhere means it is a global threat, including to EU citizens, and a global strategy is the only way to sustainably eradicate the virus.

There are also several areas which we would welcome the opportunity to work with you on regarding pandemic prevention and preparedness over the next 7 years of the new MFF and legislative agenda:

- **The world's first Resilience Budget; making the MFF budget pandemic-proof:** There is an opportunity to maximise pandemic preparedness and prevention within the MFF by developing the equivalent of a pandemic preparedness and prevention impact assessment as part of the Better Regulation agenda. This could be under the remit of a new resilience agenda which also looks at climate change mitigation.
- **Leveraging funds against the EU for a global Pandemic Preparedness and Prevention Plan (PPAPP):** The leveraging of €750bn against the EU's assets at relatively little cost for the European Recovery Plan should also be considered for the equivalent global compact. Such funds could be used to strengthen health systems across the world and develop the supply chains, stockpiles, systems and response networks needed to respond quickly and decisively to an outbreak wherever it occurs. Your leadership alongside the member states, as well as leaders from the UN and financial institutions including the ECB and World Bank could help deliver the finance needed for such a global plan.
- **Communication on pandemic preparedness and prevention:** We were delighted to hear that the Commission is working on a communication on pandemic preparedness. We would urge you to make this a truly global endeavour and that it also focuses on prevention in its widest sense including work on zoonotics, land use and climate change as well as preparedness.

We hope very much you take these items into account this week. Many thanks for the leadership you have provided so far and we look forward to working closely with you and your brilliant team on these issues in the coming weeks and months. We would welcome a meeting after June 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss these items further.

Kind regards,



*Pandemic Action Network*