

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

Nearly 400 MEPs and MPs Join Chorus of Voices Calling for a TRIPS Waiver on COVID-19 Vaccines

The European Commission and European Union (EU) Member States continue to ignore growing calls for a patent waiver that would increase global production and availability of COVID-19 vaccines and related equipment. Recently, nearly 400 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and of national Parliaments from across the EU signed a [joint appeal](#) expressing their unequivocal support for the measure, adding their voice to that of [175 Nobel laureates and former Heads of State and Governments](#), the [Director General of the World Health Organization](#) (WHO), [scientists](#), [trade unions](#), [NGOs](#) and the [general public](#).

In October 2020, South Africa and India submitted a [proposal at the World Trade Organization](#) (WTO) to temporarily waive certain intellectual property (IP) rights under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) until widespread vaccination is in place globally. Since then, and despite the growing support for the initiative, the discussions have not gone beyond the exchange of clarifications and additional explanations. This is due to the opposition of a handful of countries, most notably the EU and its Member States, the United States, the United Kingdom and Japan, among others. **Supporting the TRIPS waiver would be among the most powerful and effective available ways for governments to demonstrate their commitment to global cooperation and increase global access to vaccines.**

It is evident that there are insufficient vaccine doses because of limited manufacturing capabilities and other challenges to the supply chain. Traditional voluntary mechanisms will not and cannot deliver the scale-up of production and technology transfer needed to respond to this challenge. Initiatives like the COVAX facility depend heavily on pledges and commitments that have yet to materialise, and in any case would be insufficient to provide the level of coverage needed to bring a timely end to the pandemic. If the situation remains unchanged, the interests and profits of the few will determine the fate of most. As the Director General of the World Health Organization has said, we face the risk of a “catastrophic moral failure”.

It is not too late for the European Commission and EU governments to change course and finally listen to leading experts and elected representatives, **dropping the opposition to the TRIPS waiver and engaging in text-based negotiations.**

-ENDS-

NOTES FOR EDITORS

- This press release is the result of a coordinated effort led by Health Action International (HAI) and is endorsed by a further group of 40 European and International civil society organisations (all full list of endorsing organisations is attached below)
- For [supporting quotes](#) from MEPs and endorsing organisations, see [here](#)

- The [joint appeal](#) (signed by 388 MPs and MEPs) can be found [here](#)
- Text of this press release is also available in [French](#), [German](#), [Spanish](#) and [Swedish](#)
- For questions and further information, please contact Jaume Vidal (jaume@haiweb.org) and Alex Lawrence (alex@haiweb.org)

LIST OF ENDORSING ORGANISATIONS

International

- Amnesty International
- Association des Femmes de l'Europe Méridionale (AFEM)
- Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)
- European African Treatment Advocates Network (EATAN)
- European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG)
- European Network against Privatization and Commercialization of Health and Social Protection
- European Public Service Union
- Fairwatch
- Global Network of People Living with HIV
- Health Action International (HAI)
- Human Rights Watch
- International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFSMA)
- Medact
- Médecins du Monde
- Oxfam International
- Public Services International (PSI)
- Right to Cure - European Citizens' Initiative
- Society for International Development (SID)

Belgium

- Viva Salud
- Centrale Nationale des Employés (CNE)

Denmark

- Oxfam Ibis

Finland

- Coalition for Research and Action for Social Justice and Human Dignity
- Physicians for Social Responsibility

France

- Observatoire Transparence Médicaments
- Global Health Advocates

Germany

- BUKO Pharma-Kampagne
- Brot für die Welt
- Medico International
- World Vision Deutschland

Greece

- PRAKSIS

Ireland

- Access to Medicines Ireland (AMI)

Netherlands

- Pharmaceutical Accountability Foundation
- Wemos

Spain

- Asociación por un Acceso Justo al Medicamento
- ATTAC Spain
- Club de Madrid
- Coordinadora de Organizaciones para el Desarrollo
- Médicos Sin Fronteras (MSF) España
- No Gracias
- Salud por Derecho
- Salud y Farmacos