

Urgent call on the G20 for global vaccine delivery

Prime Minister Mario Draghi
Chair, G20 Meeting
Rome 2021

29 October 2021

Dear Prime Minister Draghi,

We wish to bring to your attention the issue of inequitable Covid-19 vaccine distribution plaguing our planet, and to ask you to consider the G20 meeting this weekend as an opportunity to address this inequitable distribution.

Over six billion doses have been administered worldwide, but seventy per cent of these doses were administered by only a few countries, and only two per cent of people in low-income countries have received a vaccine dose.

A detailed plan is needed to redistribute the vast vaccine stockpiles of G7 nations, and switch delivery contracts from countries that have over-ordered to COVAX, the international bulk-purchasing agency aimed at equitable access to vaccines globally.

● **First, our evidence shows that four polities – USA, EU, UK, and Canada – will be stockpiling 240 million unused vaccines by the end of this month. This figure will rise to 1.1 billion in the next four months. With a concrete plan agreed by the G7 countries and endorsed by the G20, and with the help of the militaries in these countries, these could be airlifted immediately to the countries most in need. Let us stress that these are unused vaccines even after we take account of the deployment of boosters and the vaccination of 12-15 year-olds in the West, and they come on top of the donations that have already been agreed.**

● **Second, the World Bank should make available additional finance immediately to build the capacity needed to administer vaccines quickly and effectively in both urban and rural areas of low-income countries.**

We believe that if all this is agreed, we can meet what the WHO has said is a spring deadline in 2022 for seventy per cent of all adults to be vaccinated. Without a detailed plan, 100 million vaccine doses will have passed their use-by date at the end of the year, exceeding 200 million by the end of January 2022. It would be unethical for all these vaccines to be wasted when globally there are 10,000 deaths from COVID-19 every day, many of which could be averted.

As you know, the probability of death increases with increasing poverty. It is estimated that the failure to deliver vaccines to low-income countries will cost the world \$5.3 trillion. Low-income countries will bear the brunt of these costs, as they will struggle to recover from the pandemic in the absence of access to vaccines.

Vaccine inequality constitutes a threat to us all. In the same logic that you cannot put out half a fire and be safe from the fire, we are all not safe until everyone is safe. Without widespread vaccination, variants will continue to arise in unvaccinated regions, and may well spread from there to challenge the vaccine protection achieved hitherto in more vaccinated countries.

When the G20 convenes in Rome, we hope they will agree that the poorest and the most vulnerable can finally have access to the miracle of life-saving vaccines.

With best wishes



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