

September 20, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

We are writing to you ahead of the 76<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to urge that you take on a global leadership role and fulfill your promise of addressing COVID-19 around the world. We understand that during the UNGA, you will be hosting a global vaccine summit with participation of other world leaders where you will be announcing an admirable target of 70% of the world's population to be vaccinated within the next year. Reaching this goal, however, will be impossible unless you and other world leaders take action to ensure equitable vaccine distribution.

While it is commendable that your administration has procured and distributed COVID-19 vaccines to other countries in need, we cannot “donate” our way to safety. The massive global shortage of highly effective vaccines can only be addressed by increasing production. As of this week, just over 3% of people in low-income countries, many of whom are also facing devastating surges from deadly variants, have received any dose of COVID-19 vaccine. COVAX, the global program intended to secure and distribute doses for low- and middle-income countries is failing. Recently, COVAX cut its forecast for doses available in 2021 by a quarter, driven in large part by wealthier nations stockpiling excess doses in lieu of providing these vaccines and funds to this global program. As your administration considers distributing third booster doses to a broader population of Americans, it must not ignore the equity considerations of such a policy in further delaying vaccine access to people in the Global South, many of whom have yet to receive even a single dose. Moreover, such an approach may also only further fuel the emergence of even more virulent variants, which thrive in unvaccinated populations.

To truly make America the world's “arsenal” of global vaccine access, we ask that you immediately deliver on the following policies:

- launch an ambitious global vaccine manufacturing program with other countries to help produce billions more highly effective doses within one year and support a dedicated financing line item in the Build Back Better Act committing billions of dollars to this effort;
- use your full authorities to require the few firms with monopolies over effective vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics to transfer technology and production know-how to manufacturers in the Global South;

- set an example for other countries by reallocating excess doses available to countries in the Global South via COVAX or regional procurement mechanisms; and
- work with allied countries on a final text to speedily enact a temporary, emergency waiver of certain World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) rules that create barriers to widespread production of COVID-19 health technologies including vaccines, diagnostics, and treatments.

Attached are further details of why these four steps are critically important towards realizing the goal of vaccinating 70% of the world’s population within the next year. We also outline the tremendous capability you have to carry forward these policies to end this pandemic. Your leadership on these above steps is urgently needed to move the world closer to a future where the pandemic truly ends for everyone, everywhere. At the UNGA, we hope that you will not just offer more promises for these urgently needed policy measures, but that you will take on a global leadership role in implementing them. Short of such action, the pandemic will continue its devastation, driven by a lack of political will to truly engage in a global, collective effort to protect everyone, everywhere.

Sincerely,

Action Corps

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

Africa Faith and Justice Network

National Nurses United

AIDS Healthcare Foundation

Network Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

Alianza Americas

New York Doctors Coalition

American Federation of Teachers Connecticut

New York Trade Justice Coalition

American Jewish World Service

New York Trade Justice Coalition

American Medical Student Association

Oxfam America

Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network

Plateforme de la Diaspora Tchadienne en America

Bangladesh Krishok Federation

Progressive Doctors

BARAC UK

Public Citizen

CASA

Rise and Resist

Center for Popular Democracy  
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity  
of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces  
Doctors For America  
Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative  
(DNDi) North America  
Faith for Safe Water  
Fondation Eboko  
Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research  
Free the Vaccine for COVID-19  
Global Health Partners  
Health GAP (Global Access Project)  
Hope for Future Generations  
Human Rights Watch  
IFARMA Foundation  
I-MAK  
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility  
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns  
Médecins Sans Frontières USA  
Metro New York Health Care for All

Salud y Farmacos  
SECTION27  
Service Employees International Union  
Showing Up for Racial Justice NYC  
Social Security Works  
Society for International Development  
SODECA- KENYA  
Sojourners  
Sukaar Welfare Organization  
The Episcopal Church  
The United Methodist Church - General Board  
of Church and Society  
Third World Network  
Treatment Action Group  
Unity Fellowship of Christ Church NYC  
Universities Allied for Essential Medicines  
VOCAL-NY  
Washington Office on Latin America  
World Renew

Enclosure: Attachment