



International Health Cooperative Organisation

A Sector of the International Co-operative Alliance

Presidency

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c/o Fundación Espriu | Av. Josep Tarradellas 123 4º 08029 Barcelona (Spain)

Mr António Guterres

Secretary-General

United Nations

New York, NY 10017

United States

18 June 2021

An open letter to the United Nations

Dear Mr Guterres,

The International Health Cooperative Organisation (IHCO), representing cooperative companies and organizations in the health sector throughout the world, wishes to express its concern about the difficulties of distribution of and access to covid-19 vaccines.

Accounting for more than 3.8 million deaths and 177 million cases, the covid-19 pandemic continues to cause terrible damage to health systems, economies and societies around the world.

The solution to the pandemic will not be final and no one will be safe until everyone is. We therefore need to ensure access to the vaccine without inequities either between or within countries.

The IHCO recognizes and supports the important work that the World Health Organisation and its partners are carrying out through the COVAX initiative¹ and the ACT Accelerator,² which through multilateral collaboration promotes the development and manufacture of vaccines against covid-19, promoting fair and equitable access in all countries of the world.

In line with the United Nations, the IHCO supports the temporary waiver of intellectual property rights related to covid-19 vaccines.³ The knowledge and technology shared by vaccine manufacturers will allow local production to be expanded and significantly increase supply to the COVAX initiative.

The IHCO also values and supports the resolution of the European Parliament of 10 June in relation to the temporary waiver of intellectual property rights in the field of vaccines,



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treatment and equipment related to covid-19 and increasing production and manufacturing capacity in developing countries.⁴

The cooperative health movement calls on the leaders and governments of all countries to take a step forward, join forces and place all resources at their disposal to eradicate the corona virus and rebuild the world better together.

The health cooperatives represented by the IHCO express their willingness to collaborate with states and international organisations in reconstruction with the aim of achieving Universal Health Coverage, promoting cooperation and democratic participation in health systems and fostering equitable access to healthcare for all people.

Yours sincerely

Dr Carlos Zarco
President of IHCO

¹ <https://www.who.int/initiatives/act-accelerator/covax>

² <https://www.who.int/initiatives/act-accelerator>

³ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2021-05-06/statement-attributable-the-spokesperson-for-the-secretary-general-%E2%80%93-the-us-announcement-regarding-covid-19-vaccines>

⁴ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2021-0283_ES.html