



Joint statement by

Public Services International (Global), European Public Services Union (EPSU), National Nurses United (USA), American Federation of Teachers (USA), Service Employees International Union (USA) American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (USA), Teamsters (USA) and the French Democratic Confederation of Labour, Health and Social Sector (France).

EU's Commitment Urgently Needed on Vaccine Scale Up and TRIPS Waiver

As representatives of workers who have been delivering vital public services throughout this health emergency, we are concerned that the EU is holding up progress in taming the pandemic. The rallies held across the United States on the occasion of Chancellor Merkel's visit are a sign of the widespread expectations that citizens have about the role that Germany and the EU should play in the crucial negotiations on the TRIPS waiver.

The announcement of United States' support for waiving IP on vaccines in early May opened the door for constructive engagement on the text being negotiated in the WTO. This was an important step and the right response to the lack of delivery of vaccines to most low- and middle-income countries. We are concerned that more than a year after the proposal by India and South Africa and two months after the Biden declaration, the EU is still expressing doubts about the relevance of the waiver and undermining text-based negotiations.

If Germany was to join the United States in acknowledging the need to waive IP protection during the pandemic, this would help shift remaining doubts from governments in the EU but also in UK, Japan, Canada and Australia. Lack of progress on the waiver is currently holding up the roll-out of vaccines in the global south, causing thousands of unnecessary deaths and placing us all at unnecessary risk as variants circulate and gain strength.

Recovery and transition back to normalcy will not happen in one part of the world, while the virus ravages other parts of the world. The delta variant is now a growing concern worldwide. We are interconnected and must make vaccines, testing, and treatments available everywhere if we are going to crush the virus anywhere.

More than a month after the G20 Summit on health committed to deliver millions of vaccine doses, the reality is that rich countries current efforts, such as COVAX or bilateral engagements, are not fast enough or sufficient to adequately address global needs. This is causing unnecessary suffering and deaths and reminds us of the millions of unnecessary

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deaths from HIV-AIDS during a period when pharmaceuticals' IP protection was not waived. We cannot afford to repeat such a tragedy.

Our members are the health care workers who have sacrificed much, too often with their lives. We wish to make clear that governments who prioritise the profits of large pharmaceutical companies over protecting lives are making a mockery of their sacrifice. We can see no valid reason for not taking decisive action now. The Chair of the TRIPS Council rightly identified the WTO General Council of end-July as the target for a decisive outcome of the current schedule of negotiations.

The world is watching. The EU will not be able to hide its obstructing game behind empty alternative proposals and other delaying tactics.

We call on Germany and the EU to work with the US administration and the 65 proponents of the text to secure a TRIPS waiver.

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