

Rt. Hon Boris Johnson MP
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

March 2021

Dear Prime Minister

We welcome your commitment to share surplus doses of COVID-19 vaccines with COVAX. This is an important first step in ensuring that as many people as possible can access vaccines in every corner of the world as fast as possible - the only available strategy to bring an end to this global pandemic, get our economy back on track and restore jobs and livelihoods. We urge you to now take accelerated action and swiftly clarify the terms on which doses will be shared.

Beating this virus everywhere as quickly as possible is in our national interest - it is the fastest way to protect our health, restore jobs and protect public services across the UK. It is estimated that vaccine nationalism and the unequal allocation of COVID-19 vaccines could cost the global economy up to \$9.2 trillion and could cost the UK specifically up to \$146 billion (according to the ICC Research Foundation). Failing to get the tools to beat the virus to every corner of the planet, heightens the risk of variants that evade our current tools to fight the disease.

We can be proud of the UK's remarkable progress with the domestic vaccine rollout and our world class R&D at the forefront of the race to find an effective and safe vaccine. The UK is also to be commended for its leadership stepping up early and strongly to fund the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator, and leveraging financial commitments from other donors.

However, funding for the global response is only part of the solution. The UK is one of the world's highest per-capita buyers of potential COVID-19 vaccines, and is on track to have more than 100 million surplus doses (calculated on the assumption that 100% of the UK population is fully vaccinated). There is therefore the high risk that the UK will be hoarding limited supply whilst health workers and the most vulnerable in low- and middle-income countries do not have access. The UK will be sitting on enough surplus vaccine doses to vaccinate the world's frontline health workers twice over.

We urge the government to share all surplus doses via COVAX, on the following terms on the following terms:

- **The UK must start sharing doses with COVAX immediately and should publish a clear roadmap for how these donations will be increased in the coming months.** Given the ongoing success of UK vaccination efforts, millions of doses could be made available well before the autumn, hastening the end of the global pandemic;
- **Doses that have already been bought must be donated and not resold to COVAX. The value of donated doses must be additional to the UK spending 0.5% of GNI on ODA, and to any future pledges to ACT-A.** At the time of the Autumn Statement the purchase of these vaccines had already been budgeted for. Therefore the value of the UK's surplus vaccine supply should be additional to the reduced ODA budget (0.5% of GNI) and not drawn from it.
- **Lead by example through the G7 Presidency** and make a collective G7 commitment to rapidly share surplus vaccine doses via COVAX by donation and in parallel with domestic vaccine rollout, a key outcome of the G7 Leaders' Summit in June.

We encourage you to take these steps to ensure that the UK is pursuing the fastest strategy to distribute doses more equitably. Because as you have rightly said 'none of us are safe, until all of us are safe'.

Yours sincerely,



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Copy: Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, Rt. Hon
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Secretary of State for Health, Rt Hon. Matthew Hancock MP

Minister for COVID Vaccine Deployment, Nadhim Zahawi MP