



**AFRICA  
EUROPE  
FOUNDATION**

# **Statement from the High Level Group of the Africa Europe Foundation**

11 March 2021

## Africa Europe Foundation call for action on vaccines

The High-Level Group of Personalities of the Africa Europe Foundation has been monitoring the political negotiations involving member nations of the WTO and G20 and is calling today for decisive action on COVID-19 Vaccine Access.

Defeating COVID-19, reinforcing our partnership on health and investing in the required capacity-building and infrastructure for vaccine distribution requires urgent political and financial investment in a common future for Africa and Europe.

The WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020 and almost a year later, over 100 million people have been infected with the death toll exceeding two and a half million. Hundreds of millions have lost their jobs and we face the worst economic crisis in seventy years.

In the global world we share, ending the pandemic depends on ensuring that vaccines and treatments are available to everyone, regardless of where and how they live.

Vaccines are an essential component to ending the pandemic, allowing restrictions on social interaction and economic activity to be lifted. Extraordinary global research efforts have created a pipeline of new vaccine candidates. But if they are only available to a few countries or continue to be auctioned off to the highest bidder, we will extend the life of the pandemic.

For as long as the virus is spreading anywhere, the risk of mutations remains and the impact on economies and livelihoods will continue.

In short, *none of us are safe until all of us are safe.*

While an estimated 7.2 billion vaccine doses have been pre-ordered, high-income countries have reserved enough doses to immunize their populations multiple times over. As a result, many low-income countries will only be able to protect 10% of their population by the end of 2021, far too slow to achieve the threshold required for herd immunity.

We therefore urge governments and the pharmaceutical sector to take the following steps to end this pandemic as quickly as possible:

- Prioritise sharing surplus doses procured by the EU with Africa in parallel with distribution in EU countries in order to reach the percentage vaccine coverage required for herd immunity. Sharing doses via COVAX should be prioritised as the only existing globally coordinated mechanism for vaccine distribution.
- Fully fund the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A), which still needs over 19 billion Euros for 2021 to provide vaccines only for the most vulnerable 20% of the population in 91 low- and middle-income countries.
- Leverage the EU's financial instruments to underpin the AU's own procurement strategy to meet the needs of Africa for medical equipment and supplies.
- Strengthen strategic autonomy for the African continent through investing in manufacturing capacity for these medical products and supplies.
- Accelerate technology transfers and temporarily loosen trade restrictions that prevent the timely manufacture of vaccines.
- In order to be ready for next disease-X, start negotiations immediately for a new global treaty on pandemics anchored in principles of collective solidarity as proposed by the European Council.

Founded in 2020, the Africa Europe Foundation (AEF) is working through its High-Level Group of Personalities and new Africa-Europe Strategy Groups to bring together leaders from across diverse sectors and organisation settings to reinforce health as a permanent pillar of a strengthened Africa-Europe partnership.

Action on vaccine equity and access will remain central to the work of the new AEF Health Strategy Group while opening up Health cooperation as a cross-cutting pillar with the Foundation's Strategy Groups on Digital, Transport, Energy and Agriculture; this will include action underway on areas from manufacturing and infrastructure development to addressing regulatory barriers to investment.

## The High-Level Group of the Africa Europe Foundation is composed of:

**Mo Ibrahim** Founder and Chairman of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation

**Etienne Davignon** President of Friends of Europe, Belgium Minister of State and former Vice- President of the European Commission

**Bono** Co-Founder of the ONE Campaign

**Clare Akamanzi** Chief Executive Officer of the Rwanda Development Board

**Ayodeji Adewunmi** Co-Founder & Director, Emprego Holdings

**Zeinab Badawi** Chair of the Royal Africa Society, International Broadcaster and member of the advisory board of Afrobarometer

**Ousmane Badiane** Co-Chair of the AEF Strategy Group on Agriculture and Executive Chairperson of AKADEMIYA 2063

**Fatih Birol** Executive Director of the International Energy Agency

**Agnes Binagwaho** Co-chair of the AEF Health Strategy Group and the Vice Chancellor and co-founder of the University of Global Health Equity

**Gunilla Carlsson** Co-chair of the AEF Health Strategy Group and Vice-Chair of the Strategy Committee at Global Fund

**Joaquim Alberto Chissano** Former president of the Republic of Mozambique and former president of the African Union

**Aliko Dangote** Founder of Dangote Industries Ltd. and Dangote Group Ltd.

**Hailemariam Desalegn Boshe** Former prime minister of Ethiopia and former president of the African Union

**Tanja Gonner** Chief Executive Officer of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

**Aranca González** Minister of Foreign Affairs, EU and Cooperation of Spain

**Bernard Gustin** Co-Chair of the AEF Strategy Group on Transport and Connectivity and former CEO of Brussels Airlines

**Connie Hedegaard** Co-Chair of the AEF Strategy Group on Energy, former EU Commissioner for Climate Action and Chair of KR Foundation

**Paula Ingabire** Co-Chair of the AEF Strategy Group on Digital and Minister of ICT and Innovation of Rwanda

**Abdoulie Janneh** Former UN Under-Secretary- General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa

**Ellen Johnson Sirleaf** Honorary President of the Africa Europe Foundation, Former President of the Republic of Liberia and Nobel Laureate

**Donald Kaberuka** High Representative for the Peace Fund of the Africa Union Commission and former President of the African Development Bank

**Ramtane Lamamra** African Union Commission High Representative for Silencing the Guns in Africa and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria

**Pascal Lamy** Honorary President of Notre Europe- Jacques Delors Institute and former Director-General of the World Trade Organisation

**Carlos Moedas** Co-chair of the AEF Strategy Groups, Member of the Board of Trustees at the Gulbenkian Foundation and former EU Commissioner for Research and Innovation

**Festus Mogae** Former President of Botswana

**Amina Mohammed** Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group

**Louise Mushikiwabo** Co-chair of the AEF Strategy Groups, Secretary General of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Rwanda

**Federica Mogherini** Rector of the College of Europe and former EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security

**Mary Robinson** Honorary President of the Africa Europe Foundation, first woman President of Ireland and Chair of the Elders

**Vera Songwe** Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

**Ingrid Wünnig Tschol** Co-Chair of the AEF Strategy Group on Agriculture and Senior Vice-President Strategic Development, Robert Bosch Stiftung

**Kandeh Yumkella** Co-Chair of the AEF Strategy Group on Energy and former Chief Executive Officer of Sustainable Energy for All

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