



February 7, 2022

Dear European and African World Leaders,

The European Union (EU) - African Union (AU) Summit on February 17-18, 2022, is a key moment for AU and EU leaders to show solidarity in ending not only the COVID-19 pandemic but also responding to historical epidemics including HIV, tuberculosis (TB), and malaria and put in place mechanisms and resources to build resilience and prepare for future pandemics. We urge for strong and sustained political will, collective alignment, and integrated end-to-end approaches. To this end, the undersigned African and European CSOs and others in solidarity call on leaders to take the following actions at the Summit:

**1. Tackle the crisis of inequitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, and support vaccination programs. EU countries should:**

- Give their fair share to the estimated US\$48 billion needed for the global COVID-19 response in support of Access to COVID-19 Tools-Accelerator (ACT-A) including COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), and delivery costs of vaccines and other COVID-19 tools needed by end of Q1.
- Support efforts to secure at least US\$5.2 billion of new funding for the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment in 2022. These will help set up a Pandemic Vaccine Pool of a minimum 600 million additional doses to boost coverage, mitigate against both demand and supply risks, and help finance critical ancillary costs to ensure dose donations get to those who need them.
- EU dose-sharing countries should urgently fulfill their pledges and donate doses with longer shelf-life through COVAX and prioritize country readiness and absorption capacity to ensure vaccines reach individuals who need them.
- EU leaders should encourage vaccine manufacturers to deliver through the COVAX facility and African Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT) and provide transparency on supply queues and timelines to allow for advance planning for vaccine roll-outs.

**2. Address the crisis of inequitable access to COVID-19 tools including tests, treatments, oxygen, and PPE. AU and EU leaders should:**

- Commit to increased access to COVID-19 tests, especially antigen RDTs, to meet the target of 100 tests per 100,000 in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and to expand genomic surveillance through sequencing, which is essential for tracking new variants.
- Implement innovative, community-based public health interventions to increase access to tests and treatments, PPE, and oxygen.

**3. Invest in and strengthen the research and development (R&D) capacity in Africa. AU and EU leaders must:**

- Commit to increased, coordinated, and sustained investments in health R&D to support regional and national core capacities, technology co-creation, and enhanced manufacturing to quickly develop and deploy new and advanced medical products that meet the unique needs of countries and people in Africa. Such efforts must be accompanied by clear guarantee of access to products and technologies that result from subsidized R&D.

**4. Support Africa's mRNA Technology Transfer Hub and agree to waive intellectual property (IP) for COVID-19 vaccines and other medical tools. AU and EU member states should:**

- Work towards a common proposition in the World Trade Organization (WTO) on suspending patents and waiving of IP rights for COVID-19-related medical tools and to reinforce the COVID-19 technology access pool. EU governments should share vaccine technology with Africa's mRNA Technology Transfer Hub without delay.
- Increase the pressure on manufacturers to support knowledge transfer on anti-COVID tools, including vaccines, in African countries.
  - This would help alleviate the geographical access challenges between suppliers and purchasers and lead to positive spillovers, such as reduced transport needs, shorter lead times, lower carbon impacts, and transaction costs among others, and expand local ownership and distribution authority for equity.
- Encourage technology transfer through licensing, while building a stronger ecosystem and an enabling environment for local production, including harmonized regulatory framework, skills development, and adequate investments in Africa.

**5. Support health systems strengthening in African countries to enable prevention, detection, and response to new and existing threats. AU and EU leaders should:**

- Commit to working together to establish a clear and comprehensive joint approach to global health, which includes investment in resilient health systems and proven public health interventions like hand hygiene, which are essential for prevention, detection, and response to health threats with the potential to turn into pandemics.
- Integrate lessons learned from the fight against HIV, TB, and malaria in their pandemic preparedness and response plans to avoid leaving anyone behind; protect human rights, remove gender barriers to health, and engage communities.
- Support the building of an African publicly-minded bio-manufacturing capability through the Partnership for Africa Vaccine Manufacturing (PAVM).
- Provide adequate and timely financial and technical support for operationalization of the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA) that can play a critical role in the regulatory space for medicines and health technologies. It is critical that strong collaboration and partnership be nurtured between AMA and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

**6. Reform and strengthen multilateralism. AU and EU leaders should:**

- Help strengthen the different regional mechanisms such as AVAT, PAVM, and the Africa Medical Supplies Platform (AMSP) initiative that have played critical roles in the midst of the pandemic to fill critical gaps in the global supply chain.
- Prioritize reform of the multilateral system to help build a fairer, balanced multilateral system built on the values of respect, solidarity, and cooperation with better representation of women leaders, especially from countries in the global south.

Whereas the EU has been direct in its support for multilateralism, this pandemic has triggered nationalist reflexes ranging from bans and restrictions on export of COVID-19 related tools to vaccine hoarding and discriminatory travel bans. This should not be the case in a new era of renewed and deeper AU-EU partnership based on trust and clear understanding of mutual interests.

Humanity deserves a world where every country is equipped to end the COVID-19 crisis and every country is prepared to stop infectious disease outbreaks from becoming deadly and costly

pandemics. We are counting on you to take the urgent steps needed now to help protect us all. Many thanks for your consideration, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Aidsfonds  
Coalition for Health Research & Development  
(CHReaD)  
Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)  
Every Breath Counts  
Fast-Track Cities Institute  
Global Advocacy for HIV Prevention (AVAC)  
Global Alliance for Surgical, Obstetric, Trauma, and  
Anaesthesia Care (The G4 Alliance)  
Global Citizen  
Global Health Advocates  
Global Vaccination Advisors  
Humanity & Inclusion  
International Alliance of Patients' Organizations  
(IAPO)  
International Association of Providers of  
AIDS Care  
Internews  
Kenya Aids NGOs Consortium (KANCO)  
Last Mile Health

LIAISON  
Management Sciences for Health (MSH)  
Marked by COVID  
ONE  
Pandemic Action Network  
PATH  
People's Health Movement Kenya  
Resolve to Save Lives  
ReSurge International  
Save the Children  
Speak Up Africa  
Stowarzyszenie Higieny Lecznictwa (SHL)  
THEnet: Training for Health Equity Network  
UNITE  
VillageReach  
WACI Health  
WaterAid  
Women in Global Health (WGH)  
Wote Youth Development Projects