



South Centre Statement to the Special Session of the WHA

This WHA is convening in special session with the promise of starting a process that could ultimately lead to saving millions of lives.

The most pressing priority is to get vaccines and other essential tools to the people that need them now, in all corners of the world. Redoubling efforts to help countries that are struggling the most to respond to the pandemic is an ethical imperative and would serve to contain the global spread of the virus and its new variants.

The Covid-19 pandemic is far from over, and it is being prolonged by the lack of effective international solidarity despite solemn declarations and the absence of actions to advance global health outcomes and economic recovery. The supply of vaccines has unfortunately been dominated by commercial interests rather than by the common good.

This special session must contribute to solve vaccine inequity by setting the path forward to develop a framework for ensuring the development and access to vaccines and other tools as global public goods, -a call made by the UN Secretary General and the WHO Director General, among others -, and effective global coordination for the implementation of countermeasures, including sharing of technologies (without the barriers that may be created by intellectual property rights) and rapidly expanding manufacturing capacity for the timely supply of the needed products on an equitable basis. Any new framework should provide the WHO with the tools necessary to never again repeat the mistakes made in this current pandemic and ensure that developing countries receive the support they need to face health emergencies.

We hope that special attention will be given to advancing the ongoing work of the member States Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies and that all member States can participate on equal footing in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on these matters.

The South Centre offers a number of resources to support deliberations, available on its website at www.southcentre.int/Covid-19; see also "A New WHO International Treaty on Pandemic Preparedness and Response", [Policy Brief 93](#).