



NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
and Associated with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations

Together for Life, Dignity and Human Rights

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STATEMENT FROM THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE VIVAT ANNUAL MEETING

January 20, 2021

VIVAT International, a network of 12 faith-based organizations, strongly denounces the unequal and unjust distribution of coronavirus vaccines which penalizes the poor countries. On December 9, 2020, in a press release OXFAM International stated that 9 out of 10 people in poor countries are set to miss out on COVID 19 Vaccine due to wealthier nations buying doses three time more than they would need to vaccinate their entire population. Likewise, on January 18, 2021, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus the Director-General of the World Health Organization stated that inequitable distribution of COVID-19 Vaccines between the rich and poor countries will only prolong the pandemic. Another problem which complicates the situation of availing vaccines to all is due to Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS); under this patent system, pharmaceutical companies that have developed vaccines have exclusive intellectual property rights for 20 years. If this system remains in place for coronavirus vaccination, it will prevent sufficient quantities of vaccine from being produced at good prices for poor countries.

We 28 participants of the annual meeting of VIVAT International held virtually on January 20, 2021 urge all Governments and policy makers:

- To support the *Covax Initiative*, through multilateral negotiations, for an equal and fair distribution of coronavirus vaccines.
- To impose a waiver on TRIPS (Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) so that vaccines are seen as a public good, the patent system is not enforced, and vaccines can be produced freely, allowing competition to bring down the price of vaccines considerably lower.
- Urge all pharmaceutical companies that produce coronavirus vaccines to avail the vaccine doses to all poor countries.
- And finally we ask all governments of both developed and developing countries to ensure that COVID-19 vaccines are made a global public good.

With confidence in all stakeholders in vaccine production, distribution and administration, VIVAT International members continue to strive to build a world where life, dignity and human rights of all are respected.