



Monday, 1st March 2021
[Nairobi, Kenya]

Dear Dr Ngozi,

We begin this letter by conveying our hearty congratulations on your incumbency as the Director General of the World Trade Organization.

The People's Vaccine Kenya is a grassroots campaign that seeks to advocate for the equitable distribution of a safe, free and accessible vaccine in Kenya and concurrently joining the efforts of the global campaign to ensure the realization of these goals. We also believe that the COVID-19 vaccine should be treated as a nationwide public good and access should be in the interests of all people everywhere, not just those who can afford it, and therefore to ensure this we aim to achieve and demand sustainable and substantive legislation, people-centred and data-driven research to guide and shape our demands and findings and finally engage our communities in education and dismissal of misinformation regarding the vaccine.

As you are aware, as a global nation we are facing a plethora of crises, the most persistent and critical as relating to public health and the global economy is the COVID-19 pandemic, the resulting economic recession and the deepening of global inequality.

To deal with all these other issues we must first collectively endeavour to contain the deadly COVID-19 pandemic and the solution in sight is a vaccine. We as the global population, are seeking three imperatives to ensure the vaccine reaches us all and we can now begin dealing with rebuilding the economy. The best and most fore-front solution to this is the provision of a safe, free and globally accessible vaccine to all with no restrictions whatsoever.

As a people, we need immediate and sustained intervention to protect the health of the people and their collective socio-economic wellbeing. In this regard, we are informed by an ethical issue

that leads us to ensure a critical focus on low-income countries. To deal with all these other issues we must first collectively and in solidarity, endeavour to contain the deadly COVID-19 pandemic and the most fore-front solution is equitable access to the vaccine.

Our goal is to ensure the global provision of a safe, free and accessible vaccine to all, with no restriction or conditionalities.

To achieve this, we have three requests for your consideration:

The Doha declaration affirms that countries can and should interpret the Agreement on the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) in a manner that protects and upholds public health, including ensuring access to essential medicines for all, especially in low income and developing countries. In this case, the vaccine is a critical commodity to help global nations prevent and contain the COVID-19 spread and minimize the rate of infections.

However, we have realized that some of the stronger countries and members of the World Trade Organization are reluctant to support this waiver. With the waiver granted, members of the World Trade Organization would be granted - on a per-country basis - the opportunity to suspend granting and enforcing of Intellectual property and other patent laws consolidated under the TRIPS agreement on all vaccine-related explorations, diagnostics, findings and technologies.

The waiver is important because together with state licensing measures,

Without the waiver, many states will be forced to rely on the leniency of pharmaceutical companies and wealthy states who may not decide to share “their” surplus vaccines with them. We must understand, the suspension of the TRIPS waiver is not just a moral imperative, but more so an economic and social responsibility for all members of the World Trade Organization.

We concur and applaud you for your efforts to warn against any elements of vaccine nationalism. However, we in the global south feel that this isn't enough. We request that you publicly urge for the cessation of any actions or intentions of vaccine nationalism and vaccine protectionism by any members of the World Trade Organization. As a first step, we would like you to garner consensus for the World Trade Organization members to repeal national law regimes authorizing restrictive and/or inequitable vaccine licenses. With intentions of vaccine nationalism, there is visible self-prioritization of states that excludes many others and further deepens the inaccessibility gap. According to available data, the United States, United Kingdom and European Union member states account for about half of the total vaccines (200 million) administered globally, while more than one hncited

vaccine will likely act as a potential obstacle to this 'return to normal', especially in low-income countries.

We must remember that none of us is safe until we all are.

This is a unique opportunity

accelerate