



**Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**  
Director-General's Office  
Centre William Rappard  
Rue de Lausanne, 154  
Case postale  
1211 Genève 2  
Switzerland

14 December 2022

Dear Dr Okonjo-Iweala,

**RE: The urgent need to agree to expand the WTO June 2022 Decision on COVID-19 vaccines to cover tests and therapeutics.**

We are a global alliance of more than 160 organizations and experts from across the world, writing today to urge you to act on behalf of the interests of the hundreds of millions of people across the developing world facing COVID-19 without access to treatments or even tests. We are very concerned about the lack of Decision at the TRIPS Council meeting on the 6th of December and the proposed delay on this urgent matter until June 2023. Each day of delay means more infections, more deaths, and greater difficulties for the global economic recovery.

The WTO has the power and opportunity to help developing countries control the virus by expanding the June 2022 Decision on vaccine intellectual property to cover tests and therapeutics by the 17th December 2022 deadline agreed by WTO member countries.

The WTO played an important role in the global response to the HIV crisis through the Doha declaration; a landmark WTO agreement that established that public health supersedes commercial interest. This step forward was made possible by WTO members coming together to negotiate in good faith to reach such a compromise.

During the COVID-19 crisis, however, wealthy countries shamefully used the WTO to prioritize the commercial interests of their pharmaceutical companies over the health of people in poorer nations. Despite warm words from many Western leaders, there was no evidence of solidarity at the WTO.

COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics are vital for controlling the pandemic and preventing hospitalisations, loss of life, long-term health consequences, and economic disruptions. However, access to these life-saving medical technologies remains grossly



inadequate in developing countries, as pharmaceutical companies prioritise high prices and profits in rich markets.

In June 2022, WTO members issued a Decision applying only to COVID-19 vaccines that clarified some WTO intellectual property rules. We, the People's Vaccine Alliance, believe that despite its significant limitations, the Decision could still help to diversify manufacturing and improve affordable access if extended to tests and treatments. This is the case because, in contrast to COVID-19 vaccines, technology transfer and a full waiver of intellectual property barriers are not necessary for generic medicine producers to make and export ample supplies of affordable treatments and tests.

Put simply, after failing the world in June of this year, the WTO is getting a second chance to make a meaningful impact in the fight against COVID-19 before the end of 2022.

It has been almost three years since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. Hundreds of millions of people remain unvaccinated in developing countries, facing the disease without treatment or protection. The pandemic remains a constant threat to people's lives and livelihoods, and still, developing countries lack affordable access to COVID diagnostics and therapeutics. Hundreds of new treatments are in the pipeline with scores in final trials, but they will remain out of reach without action from the WTO.

Developing countries and civil society across the world are looking to you to show leadership and to show that you have their best interests in the forefront of your mind. We urge you to publicly resist the deliberate attempts from rich nations to delay negotiations beyond 2022. Any delay would be a damaging blow to the WTO's credibility.

We urge you to use your influence to ensure that a decision is made to expand the June 2022 COVID-19 Decision to cover therapeutics and diagnostics by the deadline of 17th December 2022 in order to ensure that current and potential future treatments and tests become available and affordable for all.

Respectfully,

**The People's Vaccine Alliance**

AbibiNsroma Foundation  
Access to Medicines Ireland  
ActionAid  
ActionAid International  
Africa Japan Forum



African Alliance

Ahadi Achievers Empowerment CBO, Ahadi Achievers Empowerment CBO

Alan Rossi Silva, Staff Attorney at the Brazilian Interdisciplinary AIDS Association (ABIA)

Amira Herdoiza , Executive Director Kimirina

Amnesty International

Anne Marie Collins, EqualHealth

Annette Gaudino, Activist

Annie Namala, Convener, Wada Na Todo Abhiyan

APCASO

Asia Russell, Executive Director, Health Global Access Project (Health GAP)

Asociación de Mujeres Gente Nueva (AMUGEN)

Asociación de mujeres VIH Santa Micaela

Beckie Malay, PRRM

BMS World Mission

Cadre de concertation des ONG et Associations actives en éducation de base au Burkina Faso

Catherine Dimitroulias, President of the Association of Women of Southern Europe AFEM

Centre for Health Equity Zimbabwe

César Artiga, Presidente de Asociación Generaciones de Paz (ASDEPAZ)

CIEDUR

Citizens Trade Campaign

Civil Society SDGs Campaign GCAP Zambia

Coalition for People's Right to Health

Council for NGOs in Malawi (CONGOMA)

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Dr Marlise Richter, Researcher

Dr Patricia Ranald, Convener, Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network

Dr Rasigan Maharajh, Chief Director of Institute for Economic Research on Innovation

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Dr Jonathan Nkalubo, Equal Health - Uganda Chapter

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Engr(Dr.) Janet Adeyemi, National President at Women in Mining Nigeria

EQUALHEALTH

EqualHealth Global Campaign Against Racism

GCAP Ghana

GCAP Italy

GCAP Sri Lanka-SDG Networks, Secretary General

George Carter, Founder/Director, Foundation for Integrative AIDS Research (FIAR)



Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP)  
Global Humanitarian Progress Corporation GHP Corp  
Global Humanitarian Progress GHP Corp, Luz Marina Umbasia  
Global Justice Now  
Graham Duffield, Professor of International Governance, University of Leeds  
Halley Movement Coalition, Director  
Hani Serag, Assistant Professor at the University of Texas Medical Branch  
Harry Prabowo, Asia Pacific Network of People living with HIV (APN+)  
Health Global Access Project  
Human Rights Watch  
Indonesia AIDS Coalition  
Initiative for Social and Economic Rights  
INSAF Delhi  
International Movement for Advancement of Education Culture Social & Economic Development (IMAECSED)  
International Youth Alliance for Peace Guarantee Limited  
Jahid Hossain Khan, Grameen Development Society (GDS)  
Javier Pablo Anamaria , Referente nacional Alterno de ITPC LATCA  
Jesuit Justice and Ecology Network - Africa (JENA)  
Judy Taguiwalo, Citizens' Urgent Response to End COVID-19, Spokepersoj  
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Karin Slowing Umaña, Coordinadora de Investigación LaboratorioDeDatosGT  
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National Fisheries Solidarity Movement [NAFSO]  
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Rajiv Dua, Chief Executive  
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Trade Justice Education Fund  
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