

COVID-19

Technology Access Pool launch 29 May 2020

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00:00:00

HVJ The COVID-19 Technology Access Pool. I'm Hannah Vaughan Jones, here with you in London. I know we have participants and media joining from all over the world so welcome to everybody. We are of course now several months into this global pandemic and I think more than ever it's taught us wherever we are in the world of the need to work together and to support each other and that's exactly what this initiative today is all about.

I understand that so far we have some 35 countries and counting who have already shown their support for this pool, this initiative. As I said, we have a huge number of participants who will be taking part in the discussion over the course of the next hour and a warm welcome as well to all of the public and the media who will be joining as well and very interested, no doubt, in the information, the discussion and the debate to come.

I also understand that we have received already a supportive statement from the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, so that is fantastic as well. To formally launch this exciting initiative we do have, I'm delighted to say, His Excellency, President Carlos Alvarado of Costa Rica and we also have the Honourable Mia Mottley, the Prime Minister of Barbados, on the line with us live.

00:01:18

But before we come to them I would like to give the floor over to the WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros. Dr Tedros.

TAG Thank you. Thank you, Hannah. President Alvarado, Prime Minister Mottley, Excellencies, dear colleagues and friends, since the beginning of the pandemic science has been at the heart of the WHO's efforts to suppress transmission and save lives. Science is moving with incredible speed. Almost every day there is more news about research into vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics.

But will all people benefit from these tools or will they become another reason people are left behind? These are the two most important questions. A month ago WHO and partners launched the ACT Accelerator to speed up the development, production

and equitable distribution of vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics for COVID-19.

Today we're joining 37 countries and numerous partners to launch the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool or CTAP. CTAP was first proposed by His Excellency, President Carlos Alvarado of Costa Rica and I would like to thank His Excellency, the President for his leadership and solidarity.

00:02:59

CTAP is a sister initiative of the ACT Accelerator and offers concrete actions to achieve the objective of the ACT Accelerator, which is equitable access. CTAP has five priorities; first, public disclosure of gene sequencing research; second, public disclosure of all clinical trial results; third, encouraging governments and research funders to include clauses in contracts with pharmaceutical contracts about equitable distribution and publication of trial data.

Fourth, licensing treatments and vaccines to large and small producers; and fifth, promoting open innovation models and technology transfer that increase local manufacturing and supply capacity.

Through CTAP we're inviting companies or governments that develop an effective therapeutic to contribute the patent to the Medicines Patent Pool, which would then sub-licence the patent to generate manufacturers.

CTAP is voluntary and builds on the success of the Medicines Patent Pool in expanding access to treatments for HIV and hepatitis C. WHO recognise the important role that patents play in fuelling innovation but this is a time when people must take priority. Tools to prevent, detect and treat COVID-19 are global public goods that must be accessible by all people.

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Science is giving us solutions but to make those solutions work for everyone we need solidarity. COVID-19 has highlighted the inequalities of our world but it's also offering us an opportunity to bring these inequalities... and build a fairer world, a world in which health is not a privilege for the few but a common good.

Now it gives me enormous pleasure to introduce His Excellency, Carlos Alvarado, the President of Costa Rica. Muchas gracias, President Alvarado, mi hermano. Mucho augusto...

TR Thank you very much, President Alvarado, my brother.
Thank you very much for your leadership.

TAG Muchas gracias.

I think it's muted. Hannah, can you...? Hermano, can you hear me?

CA Gracias, Dr Tedros.

00:06:29

TR Thank you, Dr Tedros, my brother. My greetings. For Costa Rica it is an honour to be part of this joint work which will send a strong message to all of humanity of the wonderful things that we can do and we are capable of bringing about together to care for the well-being of all.

I'd like to call for hope, particularly for the most vulnerable people throughout the world. Today leaders of state and high representatives of multilateral organisations from academia and civil society are joining to say that we have made a commitment of solidarity to work for human dignity and international solidarity.

The COVID-19 pandemic will show a before and an after in the history of humanity, not only in terms of our healthcare systems but also for working together and for relationships between people because despite the crisis we've had to face we have an opportunity to take joint decisions which will change for good the future of the world population in the short and medium term.

So we have a challenge of a lifetime to guarantee universal access to health technologies that we need to face COVID-19. The promise of sure, safe, effective, affordable healthcare solutions such as treatments and vaccines must be the guide for our actions and it will allow us to overcome a crisis which has left behind so much pain in so many communities throughout the world.

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Nevertheless there is no point in achieving these amazing technological developments if we cannot guarantee affordable access to technology. At the beginning of the pandemic I called on the Director-General of the WHO, my dear friend, Dr Tedros, to help us build together a mechanism that would help us to make available to all states throughout the world the healthcare technology that will be developed in the fight against this virus and the disease it brings.

In recent weeks this joint effort has helped us to put together this call for solidarity and action to give us a platform so we can share openly on a voluntary basis and in a collaborative way the data and intellectual property that will be generated throughout the world in order to make it a public global good.

During the World Health Assembly, the 73rd WHO which was held in such an innovative manner recently, the member states of the World Health Organization raised their voices and supported the development of this initiative and it will allow all countries to have access to solutions which will help us protect ourselves and to ensure that we leave nobody behind.

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On this path countries from all regions and areas of the world have joined forces and I'm most grateful to them given that they have put above the well-being of others so I'm most grateful to Argentina, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, Honduras, Indonesia, Lebanon, the Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Norway, Oman, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Peru, Portugal, the Dominican Republic, St Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Uruguay and Zimbabwe.

Those heads of state and heads of government who haven't yet joined this initiative, I invite you not to miss this opportunity and to be part of a history event for humanity because nothing will be more pleasing than in some years when historians look at this crucial moment that you will see that all of our countries were part of the international stakeholders who took a step forward and took a visionary decision of great humanity.

00:11:48

So we must support this call for solidarity by joining in support of this COVID-19 Technology Access Pool, which will look at knowledge and intellectual property. We must call on our public and private companies as well as our research institutes so that they can contribute in a voluntary way to the exchange platform.

We have also seen actors from the international area who have been dedicating their work to finding the solutions to the well-being of the populations that suffer the most so their activity also deserves my recognition.

The private sector has come to us to understand the proposal and to identify how they can be part of it so I celebrate this step because those who have understood that only through a

public/private partnership can we build a better future, a future where all of the brilliant scientific advances of our societies will be pillars in the building of a horizon which will give dignity to each life and a future where our capacity will be made stronger so that we can work towards sustainable development.

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To give an example of good practices in Costa Rica, the private sector has also offered its contribution. The commitment of industry is necessary to answer this call of solidarity. Boston Scientific with the University of Minnesota under the concept of solidarity and social responsibility has given pre-approval for the open use of the design of Co-vent ventilator so that this medical device can be manufactured on a local level by companies that wish to do so.

Solidarity within and between countries and the private sector is essential if we want to overcome these difficult times. We need to free up all of the power of science so that we can carry out innovation which can be scalable and can be used and assist all in all parts of the world. It's only through the acceleration of research and development of technologies against COVID-19 that we will be able to succeed.

Nevertheless no country will be able to overcome the pandemic until we have all overcome it so the developments must be affordable for all. That's why I call on industries and academic sectors, just as in Costa Rica, to register and share their knowledge and intellectual property and data and healthcare technologies so that we can overcome COVID-19 for all of humanity.

00:15:03

The University of Costa Rica has developed and makes available to humanity a protocol for the manufacture from convalescing patients' plasma the injectable materials of human haemoglobins which are hyperimmune to SARS-CoV-2 for the treatment of severely ill patients.

These two initiatives are related to the design and validation of the diagnostic test for COVID-19 such as the development of ventilators so that the knowledge can then be transferred. The Technological Institute of Costa Rica is in this repository and has allowed Costa Rica to make internationally available three different initiatives which are being worked on to fight against COVID-19; the development of N95 face masks, the design for

covers for stretchers for the Red Cross ambulances and a mechanical ventilator.

And the Centre for Biotechnological Development has put forward a project which optimises scalable protocols for the detection of the virus, SARs-CoV-2, which come from the use of commercial kits and minimise the dependence. The aim is to create alternatives if there is a scarcity of kits and to facilitate their application in regions with limited access to robotic systems.

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This is inspired by success stories that we've seen in Uruguay, Spain and the COVID consortium but it adapts to the regional reality and the results can be shared freely. Our civil society is essential in the process. By advocating to ensure that more and more actors join in the way of solidarity.

For example it's important that the rightsholders be convinced that they need to be partners in our initiative. Shared knowledge, intellectual property and open data will make real our collective efforts. In order to advance in scientific discovery technological development and the change in the benefits of scientific progress and its use based on the development of health.

This initiative sets up a viable model to promote access based on equity, solid science, open collaboration and global solidarity. Global solidarity will speed up science and will open access to public goods so that we can overcome the virus.

Each commitment, each step forward counts. Our peoples are watching us and are looking for leadership which is capable of working collectively to find real solutions, for joint action which will help us without any selfishness work towards a world where public healthcare is universal and safeguarded.

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I continue to believe in the potential of humanity and our way to be able to bring about change. Every day is a story and it's worth working tirelessly in a collaborative way without any egoism between the public and private sectors with academia and civil society so that soon no life will be lost because of this pandemic.

With a full heart to all those here at this forum and to all participating in this initiative, thank you very much. We want to support everyone throughout the planet who needs this. Thank you.

HVJ Thanks for that. I'm going to now give the floor over to the Honourable Mia Mottley, the Prime Minister of Barbados. Prime Minister Mottley, I hope you're there and can hear us and you have the microphone.

MM Thank you very much. Can you hear me?

HVJ We can hear you loud and clear, yes. Go ahead.

00:19:57

MM Thank you very much. Today I join in solidarity with the President of Costa Rica, my friend Carlos Alvarado Quesada, and my brother, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the Director-General of the WHO and indeed my colleague heads of government to add Barbados' strong support for this launch of this important platform.

I also want at this stage to comment and to thank the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, my sister, Amina Mohammed for our strong support at the outset of the launch of this platform. Like few other threats in our history this pandemic shows up our common humanity in the most unequivocal of ways.

Through our interconnectedness and our interdependence the virus has reached all corners of our globe in a matter of months. It is almost like a horror story. Each of us has a story of human and economic loss and what we write on history's page as our success story is yet to be determined.

My friends, I tell you that it is our common humanity that brought us to this point and it will only be through our common humanity that we will emerge from it. Let us pause for a minute and think why. The reality is that democracy and multilateralism promised for both the countries and the world respectively that there would be a framework of fairness, transparency and accountability for those who choose to agree to the compact that led to the democracy or led to the multilateralism.

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Regrettably the last few months have brought us closest to the wild, wild west of fictitious fame. We have in the small-island developing states stories enough to tell about lack of access to basic medical equipment, medical supplies and we fear that when the therapeutics and the vaccines come unless we assert the right of the multilateral institutions of our world to create that corridor of fairness, to reinforce the transparency and accountability that we need then we are not going to fulfil the

promise of the United Nations and the corresponding institutions that came out of the 1945 pact that allowed the world to have a new order.

Access to new data and health products therefore to treat and prevent COVID-19 patients must not create winners and losers and small states, who are often the casualties of market conditions, cannot be defenceless in the wake of this disease. I pause again to indicate that the professional consortium being established by the Global Fund in order to secure many of the in vitro diagnostics cannot simply use a proxy of maternal mortality to be able to determine who should benefit because if they do 13 countries in this part of the world, ten from within the Caribbean, will be at a serious disadvantage and we cannot command the types of orders because of our lack of size in order to be able to guarantee access.

Barbados therefore calls on all stakeholders to make the tools to this recovery that the WHO and others are working on a global public good. I heard Dr Tedros just now outline very clearly what we needed to hear as small-island developing states.

We therefore also encourage all flexibilities in the licensing of these products to quickly scale up global production and we ask for full co-operation with the UN's technology access partnership so that the global community can exit this crisis together on fair and equitable terms. For this is the promise of the multinational institutions upon their formation to the people of the world and it is the promise of democracies at the time of the settlement of independent to our people.

Surely we all know that our markets will recover and undoubtedly market competition will return but for now it is time to heal and as we heal it is time to reflect on the values and principles that led to the modern settlement of the global community in which we function and to recognise that the challenges that are literally undermining that settlement must be fought head-on and that the only way we can fight them head-on is by those of us who constitute the majority, even if not the power of the few who are at the top, to come together and assert that transparency, fairness, market access and accountability must matter and must be attained for the people of the world. I thank you and I wish you all the very best in your deliberations.

00:25:15

HVJ Prime Minister Mottley, many thanks indeed for that statement of support for this initiative. Fairness and equitable

access are clearly the key buzzwords as we continue through this discussion. I'm going to move now to speak to Axel Jacobson, who is the State Secretary in the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Norway. Mr Jacobson, I believe you are on the line and if you are then make sure you're unmuted and please go ahead with your statement.

AJ Thank you. Thank you, Hannah. Can you hear me?

HVJ We can hear you loud and clear, yes; the wonders of technology. Go ahead, sir.

00:25:58

AJ Thank you. President Alvarado, Director-General, Dr Tedros, colleagues, I'm honoured on behalf of my country, Norway, to co-sponsor the Solidarity call to action to establish a platform for open, collaborative sharing of knowledge, data and intellectual property on existing and new health tools to combat COVID-19.

As I speak the official counts have passed 360,000 deaths globally and the true figure is likely to be substantially higher. The pandemic represents a tragedy for its victims and their families and economic hardship for hundreds of millions around the globe.

If there's one thing this pandemic has reminded us it is that challenges that are global can only be faced efficiently if we act together in a co-ordinated and global manner. It has also reminded us how vulnerable we are when we are confronted with a new virus without sufficient tools to fight it. It is now of paramount importance that the world's best researchers and developers join forces in an unprecedented manner to provide us with these tools.

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Again, global challenges need global solutions. I'm convinced that the only way to succeed is to collaborate and share knowledge and technologies, to have the necessary tools as soon as possible. Once we have effective medicines and vaccines they should be distributed in a fair and equitable way according to public health criteria. This is the only way to curb the acute pandemic in the most efficient manner.

The World Health Organization plays a vital role in facilitating the necessary sharing of knowledge. Rest assured that Norway stands firmly behind you in these efforts. Thank you again,

President Alvarado, for raising this issue and for bringing us together today. Thank you very much.

HVJ Axel Jacobson, thank you very much indeed. We are now going to move on and speak to Her Excellency, Ambassador Monique Van Daalen from the Netherlands. The Ambassador is the Representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations in Geneva. I believe you are on the line; I think I saw you earlier so, Ambassador, you have the floor.

00:28:36

MD Thank you very much, Mr President, Madame Prime Minister, Director-General. The Netherlands supports the need for international co-operation and solidarity in combating COVID-19. The sharing of knowledge, intellectual property and data can play an important role in the development of vaccines or treatments that are affordable and accessible to all people in the world.

This is especially true for knowledge that is created with public funding. The sharing must, in order to be effective, have a voluntary basis. We acknowledge that we need industry as a valuable partner. Their capacity to innovate, their expertise in development, production and distribution of vaccines and treatments and their willingness to take risk must be valued alongside international co-operation, public investments and sharing of knowledge.

The main goal that we all want to achieve is a vaccine or treatment that is affordable and accessible to us all. An innovation model based on the pooling of knowledge is, next to possible alternative models, a valuable instrument to pursue this aim. We thank Costa Rica and the WHO for their leadership and look forward to continuing to work together in fighting this public health crisis. Thank you very much.

00:29:56

HVJ Thank you very much, Ambassador. We now move to Her Excellency, Ambassador Maria Farani, who is the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations in Geneva. Ambassador Farani, if you can hear me clearly then please do unmute yourself and you have the floor.

MF Okay. Director-General, President Carlos Alvarado of Costa Rica, Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, I'm not sure you listen to me. Are you listening to me? Yes, okay. So I'll start again. You will have to listen again.

Director-General, President Carlos Alvarado of Costa Rica, Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, Brazil is honoured to support the Solidarity call to action and to participate in this launch event. We thank President Alvarado for his pioneering proposal and relentless work to bring all relevant partners together at this point.

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Access to quality, safe, efficient and affordable health technology remains a top priority for Brazil, all the more so in the context of this pandemic. Access to affordable medicines is key to build and strengthen sustainable and resilient health systems, to achieve universal health coverage and to respond to health emergencies.

In the case of COVID-19 universal and equitable access to life-saving technologies is the only way to ensure that everyone everywhere will be safe and able to return to normalcy. Brazil was gratified to see that the global strategy and plan of action on public health innovation and intellectual property is one of the references for the call to action.

Together with many partners Brazil has led efforts to have this global strategy fully implemented to the benefit of all. We are confident that the call to action will be a major achievement in public health worldwide, helping us all to rise up to the challenge posed by COVID-19. Thank you very much.

HVJ Ambassador, thank you very much indeed. We now take you over to Portugal. Dr Rui Ivo is the President of the National Medicines Authority in Portugal and joins us live as well. Dr Ivo, you have the floor.

00:32:52

RI Hello. You can hear me.

HVJ We can hear you very clearly, yes. Go ahead, please, sir.

RI Thank you very much. President Carlos Alvarado of Costa Rica, Excellency, the Director-General of the WHO, Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, distinguished participants from other states and institutions, representatives from academia, international partners, industry, civil society, it is with great pleasure that I send you warm greetings from Portugal and add our voice to the call to action proposed by Costa Rica and supported by the World Health Organization, all that aims at ensuring equitable access to health technologies through sharing of knowledge and data indispensable to the diagnosis, prevention, treatment and response to the pandemic outbreak of COVID-19.

This initiative calls for a global priority in equitable access to health products and refers to the importance of ensuring the principles of sustainability, availability and accessibility of safe, effective and quality health products which more than ever are fundamental to tackling the current pandemic.

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It also stresses the need to guarantee the production, supply chain and equitable distribution of essential health products to our fellow citizens. Finally considering the potentially devastating economic and social repercussions for health particularly for developing countries this action also calls for international co-operation in order to strengthen our health systems for this and future pandemics.

Knowing that we all share these values, Portugal joins this call to action and its commitment to the collective success in combating COVID-19. Thank you very much for your attention.

HVJ Dr Ivo, thank you very much. We do now have a representative from South Africa; we have the Health Minister, the Honourable Minister, Dr Zvalini Mkisi, who is on the line for us. Dr Mkisi, please, your supporting statement for this initiative.

ZM Much. Excellencies, from South Africa on behalf of President Ramaphosa I take this opportunity to congratulate the Director-General of the World Health Organisation, Dr Tedros, and the President of the Republic of Costa Rica, His Excellency, Carlos Alvarado Quesada, for launching this important initiative.

We also appreciate the cross-regional efforts to realise equitable global access to COVID-19 health technologies as a critical response measure as now more than ever the world needs this solidarity and co-operation to pool knowledge, intellectual property and data for existing and new diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines and for the detection, prevention and treatment of COVID-19.

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The Solidarity call to action calls on key stakeholders and the global community to commit to undertaking actions which are urgently needed to advance the sharing of knowledge, intellectual property and data that will benefit all humanity.

It is also an important complement to the ACT accelerator which was launched a few weeks ago, which aims at making diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines for COVID-19 accessible on the basis of need worldwide. We would also like to emphasise

the importance of governments and international partners uniting around a global guarantee that ensures that when a safe and effective vaccine is developed it is produced rapidly at scale and made available to all the people in all countries free of charge.

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We therefore call upon member states and the international community to support the Solidarity call to action to promote health and to ensure the achievement of universal health coverage globally. Thank you very much.

HVJ Honourable Minister, many thanks indeed. As those who have been watching so far the launch of this initiative will have noticed we've just had a series of supporting statements and now we're going to move on to the next part which is the moderated discussion.

We have a whole array of panellists who are going to be joining us. They're experts, they're industry experts, civil society representatives and members from academia as well. First of all I would like to welcome to the discussion Professor Mariana Matsukato, who is a Professor in economics of innovation and public value at University College, London. Professor, I believe you're on the line and I'm just hoping that your video is on and your audio as well.

My first question to you really is we're talking about a pool of technology; why do we need this patent pool right now in the middle of this pandemic, why is it necessary?

00:37:55

MA There we go. Good. It said that the host wouldn't unmute me. It's absolutely necessary because there's no other choice. Really from the policy perspective - because this is in fact a policy proposal - we need to frame it as actively shaping and creating this market in the way that needs to be governed to satisfy the mission which is a vaccine that is globally accessible for free around the world.

That really means making sure that we govern the process from intellectual property which of course this common pool is focusing on, the pricing, the manufacturing capability, the international collaboration and solidarity instead of competition between countries.

But to do that it really means also thinking through, what does it mean when countries globally have been putting in billions really

into the health innovation market and then unfortunately, unlike the military when they spend money on areas that they need and then govern the process to make sure they win the war, even though I don't like the war narrative it does actually mean governing this process in such a way that the pricing, the IPR, the licensing is done in such a way as to really foster what the 21st century is about, which is collective intelligence.

00:39:13

HVJ Mariana, that's really interesting. I want to bring in a fellow economist now. Professor Joseph Stiglitz is a professor at Columbia University. Professor, I'm wondering whether you agree with that, whether you think this kind of technology access pool is necessary for the distribution of health technologies whenever we come up with them.

JS Absolutely. Intellectual property is a social construction that is designed to promote innovation but in this particular case the government taking the key role in financing the research and having those ideas...

The most important input into any research is other ideas and that's why this pool of ideas is absolutely essential if there's going to be the fastest innovation possible. Speed is extraordinarily important in dealing with this pandemic. The longer it lasts the more people die but the worse the devastation for the economy.

00:40:24

So it's actually important in this case especially that there be this kind of patent pool, that this knowledge be used quickly for the benefit of everybody in our global community.

HVJ I'm going to try and connect now with Dr Jacques Debauchet. I'm hoping that he's on the line as well. Dr Jacques Debauchet. is a Swiss scientist; he's also a Nobel laureate. Sir, I can see you; wonderful. I know that you've advocated for open science. I wonder if you can just explain to all of us what exactly you mean by that and the role that you think that science should play going forward with this initiative.

TR Thank you. COVID-19's a very interesting example of a shared problem. It's a problem for all of us. It doesn't discriminate and as long as we have one person sick with COVID-19 anywhere in the world we're all potentially going to be sick with COVID-19 because as long as you have a patient somewhere

then the virus has an opportunity to come back so it's a shared problem.

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However if you have a shared problem you need shared tools to tackle it and the shared tool we have is the knowledge that everybody is acquiring very quickly as we go through this pandemic and which we hope one day will help us to take better care of patients and cure them.

That's why we need any treatments, vaccines, technology to be a common good and that is the basic aim of this initiative. This is an extraordinary undertaking, a very positive undertaking, a visible one that all of us need and it might help us to overcome some of our other common problems and turn those into common good as well.

I'm thinking particularly about the quality of life, which is deteriorating worldwide, and climate change. We'll get out of the pandemic and we are on the way to getting out of it as a result of co-operation and collaboration now. [Foreign language].

HVJ Dr Debauchet, many thanks. [Inaudible] who's the ad interim executive director at Unitaid. Mr Duneton, if you can hear me - and I hope you can - Unitaid is a huge WHO partner and very much involved in this particular initiative. Can you describe for those watching in the media and the public as well what exactly Unitaid's role will be with rolling out this type of pool?

00:43:25

PD Hello, good afternoon and good morning to everybody. I hope you can hear me. It's quite important as an initiative and call for action. Unitaid is fully involved in the development of therapeutics and diagnostics under the ACT call for action and we are working closely with partners but also with WHO of course.

Finding the right medicines, the right diagnostics and the right vaccine is not sufficient. As was said, it's quite important to make sure that it can be affordable everywhere at a low price.

As Unitaid we have a lot of experience in making the connection between innovation and of course the scale-up and we have created ten years ago now the medicine patent pool that is coping with, of course, the industry to make affordable medicine for HIV and of course hepatitis C.

It is a great success because now, as I speak, we have a dozen, a million people who can benefit from the latest innovation to fight

HIV. I think that this initiative today is very important also to make sure that we will have equitable access for the new vaccine, for the treatment that we need to fight COVID-19.

00:45:00

HVJ Thank you. Let's bring in Greg Alton. Greg is a former Chief Patents Officer for Gilead. Greg, if you can hear me - and I hope you can - we're obviously talking about patents now and intellectual property. I'm wondering and I'm sure many other people watching this will be wondering as well; with all good intentions aside what would it take to get companies on board just to share their intellectual property and their knowledge?

GA I think I'm on mute. Is that...?

HVJ Yes, you are.

GA Okay, great. First of all just let me... Hold on, I've got something weird on my screen here. Let me start with... I think that - and Dr Tedros said this initially - I'm a big supporter of intellectual property and the role that the industry's played in bringing medicine forward, however with some things I think...

The reason I'm very supportive of this call to action; first of all in terms of fair and equitable access I do think it would be fantastic to see the industry come forward and commit to working with the medicines patent pool or other mechanisms to make the intellectual property that comes out of the products that we develop, whether they're vaccine, therapeutics or diagnostics, to be produced by generic manufacturers and then made available on fair and equitable terms globally.

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I do think to make this happen you would have to expect and respect that different companies will have different concerns that are going to have to be addressed around if this is truly voluntary; geographies; around different tierings of geographies, understanding that what's fair and equitable for the poorest countries in the world will differ from middle-income countries and that will differ from wealthy countries. That's the way the industry's going to look at this.

I think they're going to look at protection around their commercial interests, their indications, their uses but I do think this can be done. We've seen this done. We did it in HIV; we've done this in hepatitis. I do think it's a good model and I would love to see the industry come forward today while these products are being developed and make a commitment to make these

products available for generic production, for local production and get to what those terms are that will be acceptable and it's going to vary from country to country.

The other thing I want to touch on; why I'm very excited about this call to action is we don't have these product yet, we do not have the therapeutics, we do not have the vaccine, we do not have the diagnostics we need.

I do also believe that the component of pooling knowledge, pooling data, creating a focus where this data can be shared to create these new breakthrough products is more important today given this epidemic than we've ever seen before. The human and economic cost is...

We cannot wait for the typical development timeline of a vaccine or a therapeutic. I think this is an opportunity to see if this pooling of knowledge, sharing of information, sharing of intellectual property, breaking down down these barriers can expedite that development and allow these break-throughs to come through.

And if this works in COVID-19 or in this particular epidemic maybe then this model could be used for some of the neglected diseases around the world that their current IP and industry model doesn't work well for.

00:48:13

HVJ Greg, thank you. I wonder if I can bring back Professor Joseph Stiglitz to comment on that. I'm wondering, Professor, whether you think that we could perhaps use this concept of a patent pool an opportunity to prepare for future crises as well.

JS Very much so. I wanted to emphasise a couple of points; one, the production or knowledge; as I said before, the most important ingredients is other knowledge and when speed is important, as it is in this pandemic, you want that knowledge to be shared very quickly.

What's interesting is that, talking to my friends who are in the research community, that is happening at the individual level but the question is, will the corporate level, will the institutional level buy into this? What I find so exciting is the commitments being made all over the world in support of this.

There's a second aspect I want to highlight which is we're going to need billions of doses of whatever medicines are going to be produced. That means it's really important to scale up at a low price. As long as this disease is going on in any part of the world

we're all going to be vulnerable so it's really important in the interests of all of us that the prices be low.

00:49:38

That's not going to be achieved through monopoly pricing of the drug companies. It's only going to be true if we make sure that there's access to generics, to local producers; the widest dispersion of production.

There has to be return to those who are making their research although much of the money is coming from the government; we should be clear about that; it's been derisked. But we can do that through royalties, through charging appropriate prices. That can be done within the patent pool.

But what is really important here is the prioritisation of speed and price accessibility and that's really the idea behind this initiative, which I really commend you for.

HVJ Mariana Matsukato, I believe you want to come in on this.

MA Yes. I really think this is going to be the moment to make sure that we walk the talk of what public/private collaborations should be in a space like this. I don't think hepatitis C is a good example, with all due respect, Mr Alton. This is actually the area where so many have written about, an area where we see billions from, for example, the national institutes of health, ten years of research and then ultimately was marketed for \$84,000 for a 12-week course, one pill a day.

00:51:02

That whole issue of how can we actually produce, again as I was saying before, along the whole value chain so governing the patent system, as we're talking about today, but also the pricing system, that it really reflects that collective effort that we're making in so many parts of the health industry. This is a problem that goes beyond vaccines.

Why this initiative is so important is we cannot risk getting it wrong. We have to today use this almost as a sandbox that hopefully will also create lessons for other parts of the sector.

In terms of what Joseph Stiglitz was saying, of course patents are important. They have simply been massively abused. They are too upstream. We today are patenting the tools for research. They're way too strong, hard to licence, they're too wide, they're used for strategic reasons. So again using this moment to think much more broadly, how can we make patents do what they

were meant to do in the beginning, instead of really just doing a lot of grants and monopoly power.

00:52:00

HVJ Mariana, thank you. Charles Gore is the Executive Director of the Medicines Patent Pool, which Dr Tedros mentioned at the beginning of this launch. Charles Gore, if you can hear me clearly, based on your experience at MPP when you have a patent pool already can this scale and level of co-operation work, does it work in practice?

CG Thank you very much indeed, Hannah. Just before I answer your question I'd like to thank WHO and the Director-General, Costa Rica and President Alvarado for inviting us to be part of this initiative.

Perhaps I can just talk a little bit about our history to answer your question. We were set up by Unitaid in 2010 as a public health organisation to do voluntary licensing to enable access to HIV medicines and also to facilitate the development of new treatments in the form of for example paediatric combinations, single-pill combinations but also to make sure that first of all access was as quick as possible and also as equitable as possible; as Dr Tedros said, to make sure that no-one was left behind.

00:53:30

The success of that model led to the [inaudible] asking us to expand our mandate, firstly to hepatitis C and TB and then more recently to anything, any patented medicine on the WHO essential medicines list.

The model involves first of all working with experts and the affected communities and civil society to identify the needs, then working with the pharmaceutical industry to actually get the licences which we can then sub-license to many generic manufacturers. That allows both scale-up to meet large demands but also competition between the generic manufacturers to drive the price down.

Then finally with also governments and the affected communities to let them know what is available, to make sure that they do access these affordable but high-quality drugs as quickly as possible, and finally to manage this whole process.

I think you can see from the fact, as Philip Jimtom mentioned, we've had a huge impact. I'd just like to mention that our generic

manufacturers have now delivered 12 billion doses in the last ten years.

00:55:10

Based on that our board at the beginning of the COVID crisis decided that we should offer that expertise and experience to the global community if it would be useful and consequently expanded our mandate to include anything that could be useful for COVID-19.

So we're now in this position of being very willing to offer that expertise and experience in the form of a pool to try and make sure that actually initiatives like this really deliver. So we hope that we will have an important role in the operationalisation of this important initiative and we would like to think that we will be able to have the kind of impact we've had in HIV in COVID-19 as well. Thank you.

HVJ Charles Gore, thank you very much; interesting to see what you were saying about how the open licensing model does work and has been working already. We've been hearing from experts and from the field of academic. Let's bring in civil society now. I want to speak to Ashal Pravala who is the co-ordinator of Access Ibsa project in India. Ashal, I hope you can hear me and I hope we can see you. Tell us, what is the role of civil society in this pool initiative? Oh, I think he may have dropped off. Apologies. Let's move on then. Joshua Setipa is from the UN Technology Bank. He is the Managing Director. I hope, Joshua, that you're on the call. I'm wondering, how can we ensure that medicines, as and when they become available, are then available on an equitable basis across the world? A question for Joshua Setipa of the UN Technology Bank. No, okay. We will move on.

Anna Marriott; I believe we do have Anna Marriott. Anna Marriott is the Health Policy Manager for Oxfam. Anna, there's been quite a lot of talk already about HIV and AIDS and the response to the crisis then. I'm wondering how conditions today compare with conditions then and whether we are better-equipped today to deal with this pandemic.

[Asides]

HVJ Let me just see if we can get you just to unmute your microphone. If not then perhaps I can turn back to one of our esteemed economists who've been joining us already, perhaps Mariana. I know you're still on the call. I can see you nodding away there. If you wanted to unmute yourself, your thoughts on

what we've been hearing about using previous models or pre-existing models in order to move further with a response to COVID-19. Again, if you could unmute yourself.

MA We can't. Okay, here we go. Yes. I think the reason the others are having a problem; on our screen it says the host has muted us so when we try to unmute it doesn't work so whoever the host is, if you could ask them to...

HVJ I will. I hold my hands up and say I'm not the host.

MA Sure. This is a huge issue. One thing that I think is really important is that currently this is only voluntary. What I have been arguing actually for some time is that this could actually become more mandatory.

Just as an example because this shouldn't be pie-in-the-sky, the reason we had - at least in the US - one of the most innovative private R&D departments in AT&T - it later became Bell Labs, a very famous research and development department - was that there were conditions attached to the public subsidy that AT&T was getting to make sure that they reinvested their profits back into innovation and big innovation beyond telecoms.

The history of conditionality sector-by-sector does exist and this is strangely one where for some reason we haven't made conditions on the governance of areas like patents to be present when you have this very high amount of public investment that both Joseph Stiglitz and I have been talking about; again, 40 billion a year just in the US but actually if you look globally there's trillions of pounds, euros, different currencies being put into health innovation and making sure that that public investment is also conditional on a governance of the system to actually meet a public interest test.

01:00:11

I think this could become the moment to do that because as along as it's just voluntary and every country negotiates it depending on bilateral relationships it doesn't get us what we're actually talking about here. COVID has woken us up that global health only makes sense when it's global; we are all only as safe as our neighbour is in our city, in our nation and then globally.

Had this epidemic begun in Africa where health systems are much weaker than in China we would globally be worse off so governing this system in such a way that has strong public interest metrics, I think, is the big innovation that we all need right now.

01:00:52

HVJ Anna Marriott, we could see you before; we couldn't quite hear you but I believe your sound has been restored for us. I was asking you about the comparisons we can make today between what happened with HIV and AIDS and the response or the climate, the conditions we're operating in today.

AM I think many of those conditions of inequality and access are still very real today. The very big difference that we're facing now is that this is a global crisis where everybody on the planet needs access to these technologies and so this is a very welcome step forward today to put those nice commitments that we've heard about global public goods; to realise those commitments in practical terms.

But this is only going to work if every government steps up to the table and makes those commitments and we're very, very welcome [sic] of the governments that have taken leadership today but we need all governments to come to the table along with pharmaceutical companies.

I will say that some of the reactions from some pharmaceutical players today about this initiative are disappointing. We really need them to properly engage with the details of this call, step up to the table.

01:02:10

But alongside that I just want to reassert this point; that we are seeing millions of taxpayers' money being invested in the research and development for the medical solutions for this. We do need to see those conditions attached that will force the pooling, force the sharing of these solutions to this pandemic.

The scale of the crisis is too big, it's too vast to leave it to the voluntary and philanthropic efforts of pharmaceutical companies.

HVJ Thank you. Ajjal Pravala, we were hoping to speak to you earlier and I believe you're back with us again now. I was asking you about civil society and the role that civil society can have not just in this particular technology access pool but also just in response to COVID-19 in general.

AP Yes. Civil society has a limited role to play here. Civil society can put pressure on national governments and national governments, especially those governments which have the capacity to manufacture tests and treatments and vaccines, who also have the political will to do what they need to do with

intellectual property monopolies can also make some efforts to do their bit to contain the pandemic.

01:03:35

But the truth is that we need the COVID-19 technology pool to succeed because it's really the best shot that the world has. Most countries in the world don't have the capacity to be able to manufacture what they need even without the presence of monopolies that will thwart their ability to do so.

But in saying so, we need to have a couple of things in place. The first is participation. We need to have the participation of rich countries and along with that participation we need to have the leverage that rich countries have in terms of their investment and buying of medical technologies so that they can then contribute to the pool.

But we also need to look at the scope of the pool. In the past a lot of access licences have been satisfied to stop at poor countries, at getting access to poor countries. I think what we need to look at here is getting access to poor people wherever they live, whether they live in poor countries, whether they live in what are called middle-income countries or indeed whether they live in rich countries.

I think if we go by the access models of the past they've failed, primarily because they have failed to reach the vast numbers of poor people in a highly inequitable country like Brazil, simply because it's classified as a middle-income country and it is assumed therefore that they have better access to buying drugs or vaccines on the market where in fact they don't.

01:05:10

HVJ Ajjal Pravala, thank you. I'm hoping that we can now speak to the Managing Director of the UN Technology Bank, Joshua Setipa. Joshua, if you can hear me, I'm just going to crack on with my question and hope that it's all clear with the connection.

I'm wondering, how can we ensure that medicines once they are available, vaccines, etc, are available on an equitable basis across the world?

JO Thank you very much for this opportunity. As a technology bank we are an implementing partner of the health technology access pool and are working very well with the WHO, with the UNDP and also Unitaaid in launching the technology access

partnership, which seeks to address some of these challenges that we've heard so well articulated today.

01:06:05

One of the realities is that having the technology available is one step but where the challenge remains is how do you then transform that technology into actual capacity to produce and be able to meet the demand that we see that countries are facing today.

What we are doing as a technology access partnership is to create a platform that connects technology holders with technology seekers and provide also support to be able to transform the technology that is available into actual capacity to produce.

We are also working to ensure that there is also capacity that will not only allow countries to meet their current COVID-19 challenges but also be able to be part of their post-recovery effort.

One of the key areas of support that we're providing to developing countries is to also serve as a repository for these technologies, for data and for knowledge and also to provide legal and policy support, which we know is very important for technology seeking entities and also to facilitates these partnerships, which are very key, as we've heard from our colleagues from civil society.

This is an effort which requires all stakeholders on board. Otherwise then there will always be gaps and we know where there are gaps; the poor countries or the least developed countries are the ones that fall behind. Thank you very much.

01:07:40

HVJ Joshua Setipa, thank you very much. We've had lots of questions coming in from members of the public who are watching this so I would like to throw some of those questions or at least one of them - when I can find them on my screen - back to our panellists as well.

Perhaps to Dr Jacques Debauchet, one question that we've had is, what learning can we draw from knowledge pooling during the AIDS pandemic? Of course this is something that we've been talking about a lot but what learnings can we draw from knowledge pooling during the HIV/AIDS pandemic? That question to Dr Debauchet.

JD I'm not a specialist on that. There are people who are much better for that but nevertheless, the COVID is...

[Asides]

01:08:34

JD I was saying before that this COVID is an exercise for the planet but also in Stockholm when I gave my speech for my Nobel Prize I was asking that anything about medicine, about health belongs, is a common good for all the world.

We have the problem, the case of COVID and COVID will be an excellent exercise for considering anything about medicine, about health as a common good for humanity. Good work.

HVJ Thank you very much, Dr Debauchet. Another question. Let's put this question to Professor Stiglitz. What guarantee can you give or can the panel give in general that this initiative will benefit everyone on the planet? This is of course what we're taking about in general; how to make sure that this is delivered on an equitable basis but what guarantee can the panellists here give that this initiative will do just that?

JS I think what we can say is that it's going to be more equal than it otherwise would be. I don't think we can ever in our very unequal society expect anything to be fully equal but what we know is that if we leave it to the usual mechanisms of monopoly pharmaceutical companies driving up the prices it will mean that those who are poor, whether they're in the rich countries, the middle-income countries or the whole of the poor countries; they won't have access unless we have this kind of patent pool.

01:10:33

So to me it's an absolutely essential step in moving towards greater equality of access and remember, many people have emphasised the fact, unless the whole world is protected none of us are protected. So it really requires a global effort to make sure that everybody gets access to the vaccines, to the testing, to the retrovirals, to the therapeutic medicines.

HVJ Philippe Duneton from Unitaid, I hope you're still with us; I can see you on the screen there. Another question - this is coming from viewers who are watching this broadcast - who owns the data and how will it be governed? I don't know if this is an appropriate question for you but I'm wondering if you care to offer an answer to that, Philippe Duneton.

PD We are focusing on the IP and I think it's right because it's a barrier but to make sure that in particular for a certain type of products you need to have a way also to transfer the know-how, transfer the quality assurance and also to have mechanisms to make sure you have the right price.

Of course that's the question and we discussed it with WHO, we discussed it with the Medicine Patent Pool because we know very well how this will work but we need to also build a system that can cope with that kind of overtime of information that we need to increase the production.

01:12:20

Just a point because I think we need to be clear; if we get a treatment and potentially a vaccine one company itself may not be in the situation to have the capacity to address the volume. So it's something that we need to work on with the pharmaceutical industry.

It's not just an idea; it is a practical need that we need to co-operate and to find solutions. That's why this framework and this initiative is [inaudible] important but we need also the sup[port of industry to find a way to address that very specific question you have.

IP is important and we have with the Medicine Patent Pool a mechanism that is up and running but we need also to address other types of information to make sure that we can really increase the production capacity.

01:13:14

HVJ Greg Alton, if you're still there on the line as well, which I believe again you are, another question that's come to us from people is that a patent pool sounds like the most viable way forward but what are the enablers and barriers to implementing this?

[Asides]

GA The mechanism's there already and Charles talked about this. We've already seen success with the patent pool for access to medicine for products that already have been developed in HIV, now in viral hepatitis and it's expanding into other areas.

With this patent pool, it's done on an individual company level. A company would go to the Medicines Patent Pool, negotiate the scope of a licence and the countries that would be covered to have access to the generic medicines that we produced. There

would be quality and other conditions on it but it actually has worked quite well.

But to comment on some other speakers that have talked before, the bigger challenge is countries that are not within the Medicines Patent Pool or are not covered by the scope of the licence; it's the countries in between and then the wealthy countries.

It's going to be middle-income countries, it's going to be poor people even in wealthy countries that aren't covered. So I think what's missing is how we address those populations and I think we need to have a really radical conversation about what the commitments at the country level are; take a middle-income country - to provide access to poor people; in a wealthy country to provide access to poor people and what reasonable, fair, equitable terms from the industry would be to address that.

[Inaudible] the mechanism exists right now. What does not exist today is that sharing the pooling of knowledge [inaudible].

HVJ Greg, we lost you just at the end there but I think you've wrapped up. My thanks to all the participants. We've reached that part in this section, in this very exciting launch when we're going to hear from some heads of state who haven't unfortunately been able to join us live but they have spent the time to send us more supporting statements and video messages as well.

We know that this is a global collective effort and as we've been hearing from all the participants so far global challenges need global solutions and I'm so thrilled that we have a number of hugely supportive statements from Excellencies, heads of state from across the world.

01:15:55

We will begin with His Excellency, Lenin Moreno, the President of Ecuador and then, as I say, we will go through several others afterwards. If we have time at the end I will try to get to some more questions from those of you who are sending them in. If not we will of course make sure that WHO is collating them and we'll get back to you with some direct messages from the experts from across the board who've been involved in the discussion today.

Please do all stay on the line, all those who have been involved so far in the discussion, and we'll go through some of these videos now from our distinguished Presidents and the like from

around the globe. First of all let's hear from the President of Ecuador, His Excellency, Lenny Moreno.

TIR I'm pleased to declare Palau's support in the United Nations call to action calling for solidarity in ensuring...

TR Dear friend and President of Costa Rica, Carlos Alvarado, Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr Tedros, we are all witnesses to this common enemy that faces humanity now.

01:17:16

No country has the capacity to fight this alone and I think we realise that. Global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic mean that we must set aside our private interests and we must all act together, showing solidarity and unity through multilateral fora such as this one, the World Health Organization, under the premise that health is a public global good.

The fight against this pandemic requires that we don't reinvent the wheel. We have to think about how international co-operation can work together so that we can develop scientific solutions that guarantee the health of all populations with no exclusion.

We must act urgently together so that we can bring a halt to COVID-19. We need to overcome the technical and political barriers that prevent access to knowledge and we have to have open and transparent access to intellectual property because it is essential to guarantee a critical human right which is health.

Many more actors will have to join the WHO such as financial actors on an international level, humanitarian agencies, non-governmental agencies and philanthropic foundations will have to join us, private pharmaceutical companies and providers of ICT as well will have to join us.

01:19:03

Ecuador today calls on the international community to accelerating the finding of a scientific solution so that scientific development helps and we have wide-ranging exchange and that the work for prevention and response to COVID-19 is in the hands of all.

Governments play a significant role in setting up mechanisms that ensure that all research is available and accessible on a global level. Ecuador considers that the pandemic is without doubt a difficulty and a problem but it also presents a major opportunity to renew the multilateral system through linked and

integrated responses based on the principles of co-operation, solidarity and equity and with a joint focus we can return also responsibility to citizens.

So my country signs up today to this call for action to accelerate efforts for development that are being made so that we can find treatment and vaccine against COVID-19. Thank you very much.

01:20:31

HVJ My apologies. I muted myself; totally my fault. We had a taster just before hearing from President Moreno of another president; apologies for that mix-up. Our thanks of course to the President of Ecuador, President Moreno. We will now hear from the President of Palau, Thomas Isang Remengesao.

TIR Pleased to declare Palau's support in the United Nations' call to action calling for solidarity in ensuing equitable global access to health technologies being developed for the detection, prevention, control and treatment of COVID-19.

The Republic of Palau has been fortunate to be one of the few countries in the world with no confirmed cases of the coronavirus. This accomplishment has only been possible through the drastic but necessary measure of closing our borders to international travellers.

Although we have successfully prevented the virus from arriving so far we, like the many other island states that have taken the same drastic step, cannot keep our borders closed forever. Island states may seem isolated from the rest of the world but we are also deeply embedded in the global economy and rely on individuals outside of our borders to enable our continued development.

01:21:56

We are eager for the day when international travel is once again safely possible and when we can welcome everyone back to our pristine paradise. Making this future a reality is why this call to action is so important. Just as the virus does not discriminate based on passports, neither should its cure.

Palau joins the countries around the world and the WHO in this call to action and affirms that the health technologies being developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic should be available to everyone.

We are already seeing deeply worrying statements that countries that research vaccines and manufacture treatments should be

prioritised in access to those health technologies. But where does that leave the smallest of countries who lack these research and manufacturing capabilities?

We need instead to turn to global solidarity especially in this 75th anniversary year of the founding of the United Nations. We need to live up to the vision of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, to leave no-one behind. It is only through this global solidarity and ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 health technologies that we will overcome this pandemic. Thank you very much.

01:23:26

HVJ Our thanks there to the President of Palau, Tommy Remengesau. Let's hear now from the president of Uruguay, His Excellency, Luis Lacalle Pou.

TR Dear President Alvarado, I am speaking to you from the north of the country where we were looking at some significant areas of outbreak on the border with Brazil and always - and in this case even more - we would like to join with the proposal and to call for governments, private companies and international organisations to adhere to this.

It's very important for coming out of this pandemic but also for the future. I think that will be a lesson that we will be able to continue so we are very happy to join this.

HVJ Is the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs in Indonesia and sent us this video.

RM Your Excellency, the Director-General of WHO, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the President of the Republic of Indonesia allow me to begin by conveying Indonesia's appreciation for Costa Rica's initiative on the call to action to ensure global access for medicine and equipment necessary in our fight against COVID-19.

The call of action is very timely and addresses a paramount issue to guarantee equitable availability and accessibility of treatment and vaccine for this disease. In this regard Indonesia supports the call to action in the hope that a voluntary pooling of patents will significantly accelerate the production of COVID-19 medicine and vaccine to meet global demand, particularly for developing and less developed countries.

This is the time for us to also rally behind the WHO to be the platform for co-operation among countries in methods

concerning public health and to ensure that multilateralism delivers.

Upon the discovery of the most effective treatment, medicine and vaccine for COVID-19 it is imperative that we ensure its availability and affordability for people everywhere. Just as COVID-19 does not discriminate between nationalities, race, religion or economic status so its remedy must also be accessible to everyone regardless of their background. I thank you very much.

01:26:39

HVJ Retno Marsudi, we thank you. The Honourable Abdulla Ameen is the Minister of Health in the Maldives and sent us this video.

AA To all colleagues, friends and leaders from like-minded governments, to heads of WHO and other relevant multilateral [?] institutions, to our partners belonging to the scientific, pharmaceutical and medical technology community and to all and everyone who believes in global solidarity to safeguard human dignity and well-being.

COVID-19 has taught us how interconnected and interdependent we are, how vulnerable and ill-prepared most countries are in the face of a public health pandemic, a pandemic that rages on for months, damaging not only our general health and exposing the weaknesses in our health systems but draining our resources and crippling the global economy, which inevitably will have enduring socio-economic impacts across and within countries and communities.

01:27:37

While no country has been spared from the effect of COVID-19 some countries are worse affected than others and the challenges of overcoming this calamity are equally daunting to such nations.

At this critical juncture, a historical moment in human history when humanity itself is at stake, the world has an historic opportunity to come together in global solidarity to overcome a global threat. Solidarity in ensuring that all persons have human dignity and are ensured basic human rights including the right to healthcare on the basis of equity and equality.

In respect of global principles and commitments where a treatment or vaccine is developed some countries or

communities should not be left behind or too far behind. We are all equal and belong to one world, one humanity.

Maldives applauds this timely initiative by the President and the Government of Costa Rica and supported by the WHO. As individual nations continue fighting the disease locally the global battle against the COVID-19 pandemic can be won only by realising equitable global access to COVID-19 health technologies through sharing of knowledge, intellectual property and data.

Therefore I, on behalf of the Government of Maldives, wish to join other like-minded nations and endorse the Solidarity call to action on COVID-19. I am sure with global solidarity and shared vision and shared resources we will be able to overcome this calamity with global solidarity and when all nations join hands humanity will always triumph.

HVJ Abdulla Ameen, thank you very much. We move away now from heads of state and honourable ministers and we hear from Michelle Bachelet, who is the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

MB Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to join you all in launching this call to action on a very important issue for us, especially today, ensuring that everyone has equal access to medicines and health technologies to prevent, detect and treat COVID-19.

The arrival of the pandemic transformed the world and our way of living in the space of a few short weeks. The impact of both the outbreak and the measures adopted in response to it have highlighted stark societal inequalities and their impact on our opportunities in life, our ability to thrive and all of our human rights including health.

01:30:20

Even before we were confronted with COVID-19 access to healthcare, medicines and health technologies was uneven with deprivation depending on whether one was poor, susceptible to discrimination or living in other situations of marginalisation.

The pandemic has only broadened these disparities and we must act now to change this harmful dynamic that robs so many of their lives and health. Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, we all recognise the imperative to build back better and it is here that our partnership as actors in government, civil society, the United Nations system, the private sector and others has the opportunity to come into its own.

Each of us holds one or several of the keys to unlocking access to medicines and health technologies for all. Some hold the keys to law and policy, others to research, development and innovation and still others to affordability. Our human rights values, among them the rights to life, health and to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, equality and non-discrimination can help us to navigate this configuration of collective responsibility.

01:31:45

The benefits of scientific progress, especially as they apply to life-saving innovations, were always meant to be shared. At no time has it been more urgent to work towards this goal. If not rapidly brought under control the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to devastate livelihoods, businesses and economies, affecting all of us in some way.

So let us join forces to exchange data and information, accelerate technology transfer and expand the availability of medicines and health technologies. Let us all do our part and let us do it well.

HVJ Michelle Bachelet for us there. Let's hear now from Jagan Chapagain, who is the Secretary-General of the IFRC, the International Federation of the Red Cross.

JC The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is freely committed to this call to action. We join the call to ensure equitable global access to new COVID-19 essential health technologies, starting from the most vulnerable populations in the most difficult and [unclear] context.

01:32:55

Developing technologies, be it vaccines, drugs or diagnostics, is a first important step. Ensuring fair allocation across countries and timely delivery to all in need, especially the most vulnerable will be the greatest challenge. The time to prioritise equity is now. Prioritising equity means putting the most disadvantaged communities at the centre of our collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fair and equitable allocation and distribution will require an effective and inclusive engagement of the communities in the entire life cycle of this mammoth process. Therefore one of the key priorities should be the meaningful participation of the organisations with deep roots in the communities and the communities themselves at every stage to promote the

acceleration of global scientific research into COVID-19 prevention, detection, treatment and care.

The IFRC through its 192 member Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies with their network of 40 million volunteers are providing life-saving services and assistance across the world. Community health workers including Red Cross and Red Crescent volunteers represent a sustainable, trusted and critical resource in delivering healthcare services.

01:34:08

Together with communities and health service providers their joint efforts at better health, prevent diseases [?], raise awareness and reach out to the most vulnerable and [unclear] populations with concrete actions; during the current pandemic they're listening and responding to the needs of the most vulnerable groups, helping to mitigate the direct and indirect health consequences of COVID-19 as well as its social and economic impact.

As we gather today to call for preparedness and equity we offer our large community network of volunteers and our global presence in support of the call to action to continue protecting every single person from the dramatic impact of COVID-19 and ensure that we leave no-one behind.

The power of our common humanity is and will be measured by how we collectively protect the weakest among us. Thank you.

HVJ Jagan Chapagain, thank you very much. Shannon Hader is the Deputy Executive Director of UNAIDS.

01:35:09

SH I'm Shannon Hader and I'm the Deputy Executive Director at UNAIDS. Humanity today in all its fragility is searching for an effective and safe vaccine against COVID-19. It's our best hope of putting a stop to the painful global pandemic.

UNAIDS called on health ministers at the World Health Assembly last week to rally behind the idea of a people's vaccine and we support the Solidarity call to action to establish a global pool of products for health to prevent, diagnose and treat COVID-19.

The Solidarity call promotes the sharing of knowledge, of data and intellectual property in COVID-19 to drive the most rapid development and just distribution of all technologies designed to detect, prevent and treat the virus.

It ensures that those technologies can't be monopolised or hoarded or otherwise restricted from reaching the people who need them most.

Just like healthcare a coronavirus vaccine cannot be a privilege. It must be a right for all to be shared and a shared investment in our common safety and well-being. Thank you.

HVJ Shannon Hader, thanks very much indeed. We're now going to hear from Paul Fehlnner, [inaudible].

01:36:28

PF Paul Fehlnner, President and CEO of Revision Therapeutics and I'm grateful for the chance to support the Solidarity call to action for a COVID-19 technology pool. In addition to public good and human rights information sharing accelerates progress and reduces cost, factors that should motivate investors to support the COVID-19 technology pool.

The largest company and even the largest country can only create and know a fraction of available information. Accordingly in an information-sharing environment each contribution of information yields multiples, not mere percentages, of information dividends. A study of 100 patients becomes a study of 10,000. A single regulatory dossier can benefit from the experience of ten others and the next one from 11.

Manufacturing can quickly scale globally from one centre. This amplification of benefit should be incentive enough not for researchers, for their funders to seek to maximise the value of every dollar of investment. Secrecy of data, regulatory dossiers and manufacturing processes may confer a profitable competitive advantage to the owner of that information in usual circumstances.

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We're not in usual circumstances. The economic cost of COVID-19 far outweighs any individual benefit. The global economic consequences the world has already experienced from COVID-19 should convince everyone to prioritise speed, including information sharing.

The COVID-19 therapeutics accelerator, a consortium of 15 multinational pharmaceutical companies and the Gates Foundation, offers compelling evidence that even commercial entities recognise that in collaboration is speed.

HVJ We turn now to Richard Wilder, who is the General Counsel and Director of Business Development with CEPI.

RW Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. The opportunity to speak on the Solidarity call of action to realise equitable global access to COVID-19 technologies. CEPI is wholly committed to equitable access to the vaccines we fund and the opening lines from the call to action resonate with us.

The single most important priority of the global community is to stop the COVID-19 pandemic in its tracks, to halt its rapid transmission and reverse the trend of consequential global distress. We know that this goal is only achievable when everyone everywhere can access the health technologies they need for COVID-19 protection, prevention, treatment and response.

01:39:00

Again this resonates strongly with CEPI and is in accordance with how we manage the COVID-19 vaccine projects we are funding. Speed, scale and fair access are our central driving objectives. The call to action urges actors involved in this work to take specific action. To that end let me tell you what CEPI is doing.

First we believe there is strength in numbers when it comes to the scientific process. The scientific community working on COVID-19 interventions can advance more rapidly if what we are learning is shared broadly, rapidly and openly.

In our agreements we require our awardees to rapidly disseminate project results such as assays and standards, animal models or [unclear] of production, share project data with the broader community, publicly disclose clinical trial data and publish the results of the research under open access principles.

Second, we ensured access to the vaccines that result from our funding through our funding agreements. Consistent with the call to action our agreements specify that the vaccines produced must be affordable, available and accessible to all that need them.

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These agreements specify how these obligations will be met, including of course any necessary intellectual property licensing arrangements.

Third, we are a committed partner in the access to COVID-19 tools accelerator. The vaccine pillar includes CEPI, GAVI and the

WHO as implementing partners. We're working with those partners to design a global allocation and procurement mechanism which will deliver equitable access to the vaccines CEPI funds.

Our agreements explicitly enable the obligations on access to flow into those procurement and allocation mechanisms in the ACT accelerator. We're glad to be able to join with so many dedicated organisations, researchers and companies to meet the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. Only by being inclusive, being open to finding solutions and working together towards the common goal articulated in the call to action will we succeed. Thank you very much.

HVJ Richard Wilder there. Finally from the videos let's hear from Hanan Sboul, the Chair of the International Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association, otherwise known as IGBA.

HS And Biosimilar Medicines Association, IGBA, invites generic and biosimilar medicines manufacturers to actively engage and commit to contributing to the global manufacturing capacity once an existing or newly discovered therapeutic is proven to be effective against COVID-19.

As stipulated by this unique and time-limited new high-technology pool sharing of open relevant technologies, knowledge, IP and data on a voluntary basis will facilitate their use in research and development and will mobilise and expand additional manufacturing capacity since effective technology transfers and early access to key technologies will be permitted.

This should be complemented by a key policy action by WHO member states to plan for future need in full transparency and co-operation with the pharmaceutical industry, both rightsholders and licensees where applicable.

A framework will be provided allowing generic and biosimilar medicines manufacturers to actively contribute to the global manufacturing capacity by utilising their know-how and expertise to produce and distribute generic and biosimilar versions of patented medicines at a global level.

01:42:29

The licences will also provide the freedom to develop new treatments such as fixed-dose combinations and special formulations for children. Competition will also help to bring prices down and accelerate access to COVID-19 treatments and help to overcome this global pandemic. Thank you.

HVJ As I mentioned before, that is the end of all of the videos. We've of course heard from so many heads of state and member of the public have been getting in contact, those of you who are watching online at the moment and we thank you for that.

But my chance now to wrap up; this has of course been the launch of this landmark COVID-19 technology access pool, otherwise known as CTAP. We've, as I've said, heard from heads of state. We've also heard from so many representatives from the world of academic, from industry, civil society as well, international partners to WHO and my great thanks, big thanks to all of you who have stayed around on the call and have answered so many of my questions and questions from the public and the media as well as we've gone through this landmark launch.

01:43:43

I would also like to express huge thanks from WHO to its partner in this initiative and that is of course President Alvarado from Costa Rica. Your Excellency, I know you've been also sticking around and listening to all the contributors on this call. Our huge thanks to you and thank you for coming up with this initiative and we wish you well with seeing it through as well.

That's just for me now to say thank you to everyone for watching. I'm sure you can watch back this discussion online as well on the various formats and for now have a very good evening from London.

01:44:36