



Remarks by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Marcelo Ebrard, at the UN Security Council high-level open debate on “Challenges to ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines”

Thank you to the UK for calling this meeting.

It's a pleasure to greet Dominic Raab and thank him for calling a meeting on this topic today, and to greet everyone here, thank you.

The pandemic, as we have already heard, has had a devastating social and economic impact around the world but it has affected the poorest and most vulnerable, above all. Not only does it threaten us, but it also undoes, or has already undone, what we had achieved in development and peacebuilding as an international community. It can accentuate instability and exacerbate conflicts.

According to recently released figures, even customary vaccination campaigns have been interrupted in 45 countries that are facing humanitarian or refugee crises. As a result of the situation I'm describing, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected millions of people, including refugees, vulnerable migrants, and especially women, girls and boys.

Gender violence has also increased throughout the world. Women are the ones who have been most affected, according to the numbers and evidence we have. That is why Mexico, like many of the countries here today, has said that the only way to fight this pandemic is through cooperation and multilateralism. This coordinated and shared way of working is key. Even if this has always been the case, now it is critical, crucial, that we do this.

In this regard, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, with Mexico as its president pro tempore, reiterates the urgent need to implement the provisions of UN General Assembly Resolution 74/274, which calls for strengthening supply chains to ensure universal, fair, equitable and timely access to Covid-19 vaccines.

It is true that the Covax multilateral coalition is an essential, innovative and extraordinary tool, but we must also acknowledge that so far it has been inadequate and that the scenario we wanted to avoid, is unfortunately coming to pass: to date, no vaccines have been distributed via this multilateral instrument.

In this regard, we urge countries to avoid hoarding vaccines and to accelerate the first stage of Covax's deliveries, prioritizing distribution to countries with limited resources. In fact, some studies show that these countries will not have generalized access until the middle of 2023 if current trends persist.





The numbers reported by the Director-General of the World Health Organization are alarming: three-quarters of the first doses of vaccine administered in the world are concentrated in just 10 countries that account for 60 percent of the global Gross Domestic Product.

A conservative estimate is that there are over 100 countries in which not a single dose has been given or a single symbolic goal achieved. There are many countries affected by this process.

What is happening today opens a huge gap between the small group of countries that I mentioned and the rest of the countries; the biggest share of the international community does not have sufficient access to vaccines.

We could say that we have never seen such a huge division affecting so many in such a short space of time. It behooves us to act, so this meeting is very timely. It's important to reverse the injustice that is being committed because the security of all humanity depends on it. That is why we urge the international community not to establish mechanisms that could prevent the speedy delivery of vaccines. Rather, together, we must strengthen the supply chains that will promote and guarantee universal access to them.

We reaffirm our support for the World Health Organization as the coordinator of the multilateral efforts to fight the pandemic.

As part of the actions that Mexico has been taking in response to the current situation, and with the support of the Mexican private sector, together with the Government of Argentina, an agreement was reached with the AstraZeneca laboratories to produce and fill and finish the bottles of vaccine in Mexico and Argentina and make it available to various countries in our region.

Mexico has managed to be among the few countries that have access to vaccines thanks to the support of many countries: the European Union, India and China. We thank all of you, but we have to look out for everyone else. Those of us who have possibilities have to show solidarity with those that do not.

Therefore, I reiterate, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, our call to Covax to accelerate access to the vaccines via the Covax coalition, and to stop the undue hoarding that the entire international community is facing.

Mr. President:

It seems to me that the measures that should be proposed are, first, that the Security Council can and must play an active and decisive role so that the goal I have just described can be achieved.

It is true, and we agree, that we must reaffirm support for implementation of Resolution 2532 and, in this regard, strengthen support for the Secretary-General's appeal for a





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global ceasefire to focus on ending the Covid-19 pandemic. It is also true that we must put women and young people at the center of our concerns and actions.

And, in conclusion, I would like to say: let us, in a resolute and committed manner, make Resolution 74/274 our own, in order to truly guarantee universal, fair, equitable and timely access to vaccines for all countries.

This is, without a doubt, the main challenge we face and, if it is not resolved, it is also the main risk to the security of humanity and also, I have to say, to the prestige of multilateral action in our time.

Thank you.

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