



## **U.S. Backs TRIPS Waiver amid Global Calls to Put People before Profit and Free the Vaccine**

After months of tireless campaigning by activists from around the world, yesterday the Biden administration announced that they will back the TRIPS waiver, suspending patent protections for Covid-19 vaccines. This decision breaks up a months-long stalemate as the U.S. has been a critical obstacle at the World Trade Organization, blocking the proposed Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waiver, initially proposed by Indian and South African delegates in October 2020.

This decision is a huge step towards getting vaccines to everyone around the globe who wants one - and finally ending this pandemic. If the Biden administration and negotiators hold to the spirit of this commitment, this decision has the potential to save millions of lives, and stave off dreaded mutations of the virus that continues to spread around the world.

This decision also reminds us of the collective power of people from around the globe and from different walks of life coming together. From South Africa to Southern California and beyond, a broad coalition of grassroots organizers came together to bring the issue of global vaccine justice to the headlines. People rallied at elected officials' homes and offices, demonstrated at pharmaceutical companies headquarters, sent millions of messages, and took to the streets calling for global vaccine access.

When we recognize that our shared interests and responsibility for each other stretches across borders and we join in solidarity, together we can push back against corporate power and win.

Let's hold onto this knowledge.

Now that the U.S. administration has announced their support for waiving patent protections for vaccines, it is crucial that the negotiations at the World Trade Organization proceed as quickly as possible and that they include the full range of life-saving technologies needed to stop the virus, including vaccines, test kits, treatments, medical equipment and PPE.

Pharma lobbyists and the politicians under their influence are already stepping in to delay and weaken a final agreement. Their obstruction has already caused enough preventable deaths and the pandemic is sickening hundreds of thousands of people every day in India, Latin America, and beyond.

Now our government needs to move forward supporting a robust patent waiver, as well as further information and technology sharing, and funding to distribute the live-saving medicines that will end this pandemic for all people in all countries as soon as possible.

As the pandemic has spread around the world, we have repeatedly seen just how deadly the institutions and policies that prioritize profits over people are when left unchecked. And we've seen how the harms of capitalism disproportionately impact Black and Brown communities around the globe. Let us hold onto the lessons from this push for global public health as we continue to work for trade justice and climate justice for all communities around the globe.