



Closing statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, President of the Economic and Social Council and the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN at the ‘A Vaccine for all’ Special Ministerial Meeting by the Economic and Social Council

New York, April 16, 2021

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, Excellencies,

It has been a very long and very interesting and a very important debate as has been indicated. I will attempt to capture the important, indeed, epic proportions of this discussion in a presidential summary which I will issue in the next 24 to 48 hours. I will not attempt to make such a summary today, but I would like to underline that this debate is indicating the enormity of the challenge and the threat that we are facing if we do not act with the solidarity that ought to be expected in that has been expressed, especially in the political declaration adopted by 180 countries initiated by Lebanon.

We know what to do. We know what we need to do. We need to work with the international organizations that are in the lead: WHO, UNICEF, the ACT Accelerator, COVAX. It has to be collective action and it has to be universal action.



We know we need to expand production, and for that purpose, we need to have at least a temporary suspension of the TRIPS restrictions. Lives are more important than incentives and we need to prioritize. We need investment in the production facilities. There are so many in the developing world, as Bangladesh has mentioned, who can assume the production of the vaccines and make it available not only to their own people, but to others. We need to have a short supply to finance the gap in the COVAX facility and the ACT Accelerator to fulfill commitments or contracts that have been made with COVAX to release the stock so it says vaccines that are held by some countries and to end the export and other restrictions which are displays of vaccine nationalism.

We need to equip developing countries inside to build the logistics, the storage, and the distribution capacities that they will need to distribute the vaccine equitably within their countries. We need to promote the public awareness and to halt disinformation against vaccination. We need to promote resilient health system systems to guard against future pandemics and to build the capacity of the developing countries. I think we all know what we need to do. The issue is now one of political will and the political will has to come from those who have the capacity to contribute and to act. We appreciate the actions that have been taken by those who have contributed. But we all know that that is insufficient and that much larger action is required, financial, as well as, on the on the production and distribution side. Much larger action is needed. We look for the commitment of these major countries, we look for their leadership, and we looked for their solidarity. This is an



acid test for humanity. If we fail in this, we will fail in meeting other challenges like the climate crisis. And, therefore, let us make the slogan that we have adopted, “No one is safe until all of us are safe”. Let us not only make it a slogan but a reality.

Thank you.

This meeting is adjourned.
