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WFTU TRADE UNION INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE & ALLIED STATEMENT ON FREE & SAFE VACCINE FOR ALL WFTU CAMPAIGN

“Workers of the world unite you have nothing to lose but your chains”

The World Federation of Trade Unions [WFTU] Trade Union International Public Services and Allied [TUI PS & A], a class oriented union representing more than 30 million members around the world, joins millions of workers around the world in support of the WFTU FREE AND SAFE VACCINE FOR ALL CAMPAIGN.

2020 has been a devastating year for the global economy as well as the health of millions of citizens around the world including frontline workers, most of whom were forced to combat the COVID 19 virus pandemic without adequate PPEs. 2021 will not be different as COVID 19 infections will be worsened before it becomes better. Indeed, more lives will be lost if vaccines do not reach the healthcare workers, the most vulnerable and poor people on time.

WFTU-TUI-PS&A welcomes the quick response by a number of countries in developing vaccines in a short period of time in order to help curbing the spread of the COVID 19 pandemic and really applaud countries like Russia, China, Cuba, India UK and USA.

We also welcome the progressiveness of the World Health Organisation (WHO's) “Fair allocation mechanism for COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility”

According to the WHO, “Equitable distribution is particularly important in the area of vaccines, which, if used correctly and equitably, could help to stop the acute phase of the pandemic and allow the rebuilding of our societies and economies”.

We further note the article published by Cuban Journalist Cuban Randy Alonso on the online Magazine People's World that, “While high-income countries represent only 16% of the world's population, they currently hold 60% of the vaccines for COVID-19 that have been purchased so far.” It is our firm view that the distribution of vaccines through WHO COVAX program is so critical important for all.

As WFTU-TUI-PS&A, we are very concerned though with the behavior and conduct of the richest nations with regards to the procurement and distribution of vaccines as we have noticed the gradual growing of nationalism where countries have moved away from international co-operation and solidarity into narrow national interest.

It is imperative to point out that the unnecessary stocking up of vaccines, even up to more than quadruple times of doses per capita in these countries, thus wiping out supply of vaccines

“Working People of All Countries UNITE”

in the market at the expense of the periphery is not acceptable. The TUI PS&A is of the view that these countries must be challenged to release their excesses to the struggling and underdeveloped countries. Vaccines are use-values, not commodities, but public goods; yes not profits before people but not profits at all but health, lives and livelihoods first.

We further notice that many countries have no plans to vaccinate migrants and asylum seekers or populations under their occupation.

In light of this, we call upon all multilateral organisations such as International Labour Organisation, United Nation, European Union, African Union, etc to put pressure on all governments in the world to support the call by the WHO for vaccine to be distribution through the COVAX program to ensure access to all.

In this regard as WFTU Trade Union International Public Service and allied, we therefore say:

- No to nationalism on the distribution of COVID 19 vaccines,
- All nations should promote cooperation and solidarity.
- No to Xenophobia with regard to access to COVID 19 Vaccines.
- All Vaccines must be distributed through the WHO COVAX program.

We finally call upon all our members and friends around the world to support the WFTU campaign by fighting for “FREE AND SAFE VACCINE FOR ALL”.

Issued by Zola Saphetha General Secretary TUI-PS&A

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