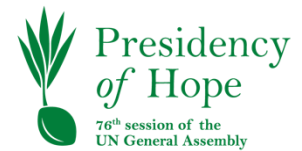


GALVANISING MOMENTUM *for* UNIVERSAL VACCINATION



A High-Level Thematic Debate convened by the President of the 76th session of the UNGA
Friday, 25 February 2022 | General Assembly Hall

CONCEPT NOTE

The global crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impede the health, economic and social wellbeing of millions of people around the world. Despite vaccines being developed in record time, global vaccination coverage is far from being at the scale needed to curb transmission worldwide.

The United Nations General Assembly has called for equitable and full vaccination of everyone, everywhere. Member States have spoken unequivocally on the need for universal vaccination in the shortest possible period of time.

Since the start of the global vaccination campaign, countries have experienced unequal access to vaccines and varying degrees of efficiency in rolling out vaccines. If vaccines continue to remain elusive to the vast majority of the global population, the pandemic could continue on for several years as the virus mutates and widens transmission to the vulnerable. There is a crucial need to look at vaccines supply, and the donation of surplus dosages – both from the manufacturers and donor countries. It is critical to donate more vaccine doses to the COVAX Facility in order to reach the targets. There is also the issue of lack of absorptive capacity in some countries where vaccines are available.

Delivering billions of vaccines to stop the spread of COVID-19 worldwide is one of the greatest challenges ever undertaken. During the initial stages, the development of innovative COVID-19 vaccines which relied on new production techniques and expertise available in a few facilities globally added to supply side constraints. Furthermore, the growing need for booster doses to address the waning immunity and new variants is expected to further scale up global demand for vaccines.

In addition to delivering vaccines, the full array of tools at our disposal must be utilized. These include training of health care workers and responders, alleviating distribution bottlenecks and sharing of best practices in all problem-solving areas related to the pandemic. The task on hand is beyond the means of any one country; or any group of countries; or of private sector or of the UN system working on their own.

The first and foremost priority of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly is to focus on **Recovering from COVID-19**. Equal access to effective and affordable vaccines is key to contain the current crisis and recover from COVID-19. Vaccination must be universal, leaving no country, no region, and no one behind.

Objective:

With the urgent need to meet the global vaccination targets in countries and regions around the world, the President of the General Assembly will host a High-level Thematic Debate on Friday, 25 February 2022, in the General Assembly Hall, United Nations Headquarters in New York to renew political commitment to achieve universal vaccination in the shortest possible period of time.

The event will provide Member States and other relevant stakeholders an opportunity to review existing challenges in vaccine production, distribution, and immunization, and provide a platform to build synergy among existing strategies and initiatives aimed at bridging the vaccine gap.

Format:

The High-level Thematic Debate will comprise of an opening segment, two high-level roundtables and a high-level closing segment, which will take place in hybrid format.

Outcome:

The outcome of the meeting will be captured in a summary by the President of the General Assembly.

Discussions:

The discussions at the High-level Thematic Debate will be guided by the following questions:

- i. What is the state of play in vaccine production and distribution against the global demand?
- ii. What are the constraints in vaccine administration in different countries and regions?
- iii. What are the solutions to achieve universal vaccination in the shortest possible period of time?