

## **European Commission: Political leadership must be matched by even greater financial support.**

COVID-19 has seen the European Union step up and take an unprecedented leadership position on global health. Throughout the pandemic, Team Europe has maintained steadfast political commitment to global, equitable access to diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines. The philosophy Europe followed has always been that ensuring equitable access to available COVID-19 tools in low and lower middle-income countries is a moral imperative that enshrines the essence of what it means to be European. To stop the virus everywhere is also the only way to protect Europeans' health and livelihoods in the long term.

Political leadership must be matched by even greater financial support. We continue to value the European Commission's role in setting up the ACT Accelerator and mobilising funding from within and outside the EU. We also recognise the substantial direct contribution the European Commission and EU Member States have already made. Yet, a mutating virus that produces new variants is constantly challenging the currently available tools to fight COVID-19 – increased support to the ACT-Accelerator is urgently needed to halt the loss of lives, protect livelihoods and get economies back on track.

Now is the time for bold action. Support for the ACT-Accelerator must be seen and financed as a crucial part of Europe's domestic recovery plan. We are thankful for Team Europe's commitments so far, and we note with interest [calls by Civil Society Organisations](#) for the European Commission to pledge at least 1.2 billion Euros, to provide the necessary funding across vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and health systems. Although ambitious, this commitment towards the development and delivery of COVID-19 tools through the ACT-Accelerator would be an investment in our health, our future, and our economies. An investment worth the effort, when compared to the economic and social costs of an ongoing pandemic. Looking ahead to the G20 Global Health Summit on May 21<sup>st</sup>, and future opportunities over the coming weeks, an ambitious pledge from the EU will show the world that Europe is ready to act. This, in turn, will encourage other leaders to step up their commitments to global solidarity. To move on from the current pandemic, the global community must ensure the ACT Accelerator is fully funded.

As a global community, we face two options: bring the pandemic under control in just a few countries or regions or work together to end the acute phase and bring the pandemic under control everywhere. Today, we call on the European Union to – once again – demonstrate its vision and leadership.

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