

WHO Executive Board Special Session on the COVID-19 Response

Monday 5 October – Tuesday 6 October 2020

AGENDA ITEM 3: Update on implementation of resolution WHA73.1 (2020) on the COVID-19 response

HAI is pleased to acknowledge the DG's interim report on the implementation of Resolution WHA73.1, noting the efforts of the Secretariat to reflect all endeavours undertaken by WHO for an effective response to the pandemic.

Resolution WHA73.1 was a milestone, for it embodied a hitherto unseen global commitment and response. But three months on, the pandemic continues unabated and the words of solidarity have not translated into action. Inequalities in access to any potential vaccines and/or therapeutics are growing both between and within Member States.

Regarding the document under discussion (EBSS/5/2), we commend the effort to reach out to stakeholders and seek common ground with variety of actors. And whilst we note positively the huge support from Governments for initiatives such as GAVI's Covax facility, we remain deeply concerned about the lack of operational details for the COVID-19 Technology Access Pool, which by pooling Intellectual Property rights, data and know-how will be critical for the scale-up of global manufacturing capacity.

We ask governments, public research and manufacturing institutions to step up their support for C-TAP and encourage participation of private biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies. We expect the Secretariat to publish, in the next 90 days, a detailed roadmap for the implementation of C-TAP.

We question why there is no mention of TRIPS flexibilities in the interim report, despite explicit instruction in the Resolution to take them into consideration when seeking to improve development, manufacturing and distribution capabilities. We feel that public interest civil society organisations have not been consulted, which would have normally been the case. Conversely, we see the growing influence of private actors in opaque discussion and decision-making processes.

We support WHO's role to lead the response to COVID-19 but insist on transparency, participation and accountability. Only a collective effort will deliver a durable solution.