



73rd World Health Assembly (resumed session)

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Statement by Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, delivered on 12 November 2020

Honourable President of the Assembly,

Ministers,

Director-General,

Distinguished delegates,

I speak on behalf of UNAIDS.

The world has hailed the announcement from Pfizer and BioNTech that their vaccine is proving 90% effective against COVID-19.

In their own words, they praised this moment as a "great day for science and humanity".

It is a great day for science.

But in order to ensure it is a great day for humanity, this vaccine needs to be a People's Vaccine.

Pfizer and BioNTech must openly share their vaccine technology so the billions of doses needed to vaccinate the world can be produced now at the lowest possible price. Otherwise, billions of people who desperately need this vaccine will be lucky to get it.

And health should never depend on luck. Never depend on the money in your pocket.

It is a human right.

This is the moment to prove that multilateralism is alive, that we have learnt the painful lessons of the past, from the early years of the AIDS response. That we express global solidarity and shared responsibility not only through words but through our actions.

If not, this vaccine will be 0% effective for the vast majority of people.

This is our one chance to get it right.