



AUSTRALIA



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UNITED NATIONS INFORMAL MEETING OF THE PLENARY ON THE LAUNCH OF THE POLITICAL DECLARATION ON EQUITABLE GLOBAL ACCESS TO COVID-19 VACCINES

26 February 2021

**Statement by H.E. The Hon. Mitch Fifield,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the
United Nations on behalf of MIKTA**

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of MIKTA: Mexico, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and my own country Australia.

MIKTA is proud to stand with over 175 delegations to support the equitable access and distribution of safe, affordable and effective COVID-19 vaccines for all, so that no country is left behind, in accordance with resolution 74/274.

We firmly believe that we are not safe, until we are all safe. We must ensure the vaccines rollout reaches all people, irrespective of sex, age, race or ethnicity, especially those who are in vulnerable situations, while continuing to prioritise front-line workers, healthcare workers and older populations.

We commend the core group for initiating this Political Declaration. It is a call to action, which captures the urgency and magnitude of the challenge we face. But the words in the Declaration are not enough. Translating these commitments into urgent action requires partnerships, financing and sustained political will.

MIKTA believes effective multilateralism must be at the heart of our response. We are heartened by the progress of international initiatives such as the ACT Accelerator and its COVAX Facility, which has shipped over 31 million COVID-19 vaccines to 57 countries. We commend the COVAX Advanced Market Commitment Engagement Group's efforts to secure doses for 92 low and middle income economies to ensure fair access and equitable global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in a timely manner.

Nevertheless, it remains insufficient. We must continue this progress – at pace. We encourage relevant international organizations to swiftly and decisively scale up their efforts within their mandates to facilitate the delivery of the vaccine, where health systems may be less able to cope with the pandemic. We support the sharing of information and best practices between nations, as well as the efforts to counter “infodemics” on COVID-19.

Building community confidence in vaccines is crucial to their effective delivery. MIKTA members are working with community leaders and influencers, supporting community health workers and ensuring that we have effective systems in place to deliver and monitor COVID-19 vaccine programs.

MIKTA countries stand in solidarity with the international community and commit to playing our part to ensure the COVID-19 vaccines reaches all people.

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