



6 May 2021

I am writing to seek your support in the campaign for a temporary waiver of intellectual property rights – or Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) – for life-saving medical supplies in light of the global Covid-19 pandemic.

There is currently a second wave of Covid-19 breaking through the global south, with record numbers of cases and deaths being recorded in recent weeks. That's why it's vital to ensure that intellectual property rights do not prevent the development and availability of affordable pharmaceuticals and vaccines for developing world countries.

Billions of people are sick, dying, bereaved or at risk due to the lack of vaccine coverage. The rapid upscaling of vaccine manufacturing, among other crucial medical supplies, is imperative to effectively respond to the outbreaks, so that they can be made available promptly, in sufficient quantities, and at affordable prices to meet global demand.

Several instances have been reported where intellectual rights have hindered the timely provision of life-saving supplies. The time to act is slowly running out, as the situation is expected to worsen further with developing countries such as India not even predicted to have reached their peak of cases yet.

Fórsa represents over 80,000 workers in Ireland, including 30,000 healthcare workers who, like other frontline workers around the world, have been working tirelessly in response to the pandemic. Now frontline workers and citizens in developing countries are suffering because of poor access to vaccines.

The urgency of the situation has also pushed forward discussion at the WTO and the proposals are set to be considered by its General Council in early May.

I am writing to ask you to use your platform in the European Parliament to support the proposed TRIPS waiver. The removal of barriers to increase the global supply of vaccines is crucial in the drive to provide affordable and quality vaccines in the developing countries, and to ensure that the entire world, including Europe, can get the virus under control and stay ahead of new variants.

Fórsa has pledged its full support in the campaign for this landmark proposal to temporarily waive the intellectual property rights for life-saving medical supplies and asks for your cooperation and support on the same.

There is a chance to respond to the urgent call for global solidarity, and combating the Covid-19 crisis by sharing the advancements in European technology and know-how with the countries that need it most.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Callinan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kevin" and the last name "Callinan" clearly distinguishable.

Kevin Callinan
General Secretary