



## MESSAGE FROM THE SOUTH CENTRE TO THE 73rd WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Today we are facing a global health, economic and social crisis, the most serious in the last hundred years. The resolution adopted by this World Health Assembly on COVID 19 should have been more ambitious given the dimension of the current crisis. The response to an exceptional challenge must be exceptional. The COVID 19 pandemic forces us to reflect on whether many health systems and the WHO itself were prepared to face this crisis.

The South Centre's message can be summarized in the following four points:

1. All Covid-19 related drugs, diagnostics, vaccines and health products, existing or future, should be considered **global public goods**, as clearly stated by the United Nations Secretary General on April 24. This will be the only way to make these products available to everyone, everywhere, at the same time.
2. The current health crisis is an opportunity for WHO member countries to reinvent the Organization, making it a stronger and more independent public international agency with the capacity to manage and coordinate global health actions, in normal times and in times of crisis. It is urgent to provide WHO with instruments to implement its resolutions in accordance with its Constitution, including article 19.
3. Pharmaceutical innovation must be structurally linked to access. It is necessary to rethink the model of research and development to focus on health rather than on commercial interests supported by patents and other intellectual property rights. A new model must be designed under the auspices of the WHO and implemented through mechanisms already provided for in the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property.
4. Step up solidarity with the countries most disadvantaged to tackle the pandemic, without forgetting about the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda, including on universal health coverage. No one should be left behind.