

ETF calls on the immediate waiver of patents on Covid-19 vaccines

The Executive Committee (EC) of the European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF), meeting on 26 May 2021 noted:

- The rising levels of Covid-19 in the global south leading to a high number of deaths, particularly in countries like India, Argentina and Nepal;
- The acute shortage of vaccinations and other medical equipment in the global south;
- The lack of willingness from the European Commission and European nations to give an emergency waiver on intellectual property rights under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS);
- The statements of the WHO and the ITF condemning the unwillingness of countries in the global north to provide an emergency waiver.

The ETF Executive Committee:

- **Believes** that a genuine recovery from Covid-19 will be possible only when it occurs globally and simultaneously;
- **Demands** the European Commission, EU Council and all European States immediately support India and South Africa's proposal at the WTO to fight Covid-19. The proposal calls for an emergency waiver on intellectual property rights under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) specifically related to "prevention, containment and treatment" of the Covid-19 virus;
- **Condemns** the restrictive approach to production, distribution and intellectual property which places profit, national interest and ownership above global humanitarian concerns. In addition, deplors the absence of co-operation on development of vaccines where associated costs could be covered jointly by international bodies, non-governmental organisations and governments;
- **Stands in solidarity with** the people of all nations that are currently facing devastating waves of the pandemic, including Argentina, India, Paraguay, Colombia, Nepal, Botswana and Timor-Leste;
- **Calls** on all countries to provide immediate universal access to Covid-19 vaccines, treatments and equipment needed to prevent deaths due to Covid-19. To do this governments must ensure that there is continued financial support for future investment in research and development, guarantee the Quality, Safety and Efficacy of vaccines manufactured out of patent through a set of agreed global standards, and make sure the framework for production & distribution has operational and medical integrity, and facilitates fair and equitable global supply of the vaccine (as opposed to exacerbate vaccine inequality).