



## **Joint Statement on the Global Tragedies of COVID-19**

As we enter the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are beginning to see signs of hope. Thanks to robust vaccine production and an increased number of inoculations, we can hopefully look to an improved outlook for COVID-19 in many regions of the world. However, this cannot be said for all countries, although media attention on the battle against the virus in India, Brazil and other countries has begun to wane, the problem itself has not. Emergence of the Delta variant is only the most recent evidence that more work remains.

It is therefore paramount that we continue to call attention to – and support – these, and other countries with continued high infection rates. Lack of access to personal protective equipment, ventilators, oxygen, medications and other critical medical equipment has made the fight against COVID-19 in these nations extremely challenging. But by far the most important driving force for the surge of infections in these areas has been inadequate access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Only by achieving global vaccination can we succeed in our battle against SARS-CoV-2. We therefore urge governments around the world to provide swift and equitable access to the vaccines by ensuring that they are distributed to all countries experiencing limited access.