

World Health Organization urges rich nations not to undermine COVAX scheme

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Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director general of the WHO, said rich countries need to ensure before they seek more vaccines that their requests do not undermine COVAX deals. (Photo: Christopher Black/World Health Organization/Handout via Reuters)

Geneva, February 23 (RHC)-- The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) has pleaded with rich countries to check before ordering additional COVID-19 vaccine shots for themselves whether that undermines efforts to get vaccine shots to poorer nations.

Wealthy nations have snapped up several billion vaccine doses and some countries have ordered enough shots to vaccinate their populations more than once, while some countries in the developing world have little or nothing.

European nations have given financial support to the UN-backed COVAX scheme, which aims to get vaccines to the world's most vulnerable people and are considering sharing some of their own doses – though they have not specified when.

Dr. Tedros emphasized that rich countries need to “cooperate in respecting the deals that COVAX did” and make sure before they seek more vaccines that their requests do not undermine those deals. “But I don't think they're asking that question,” he said.

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