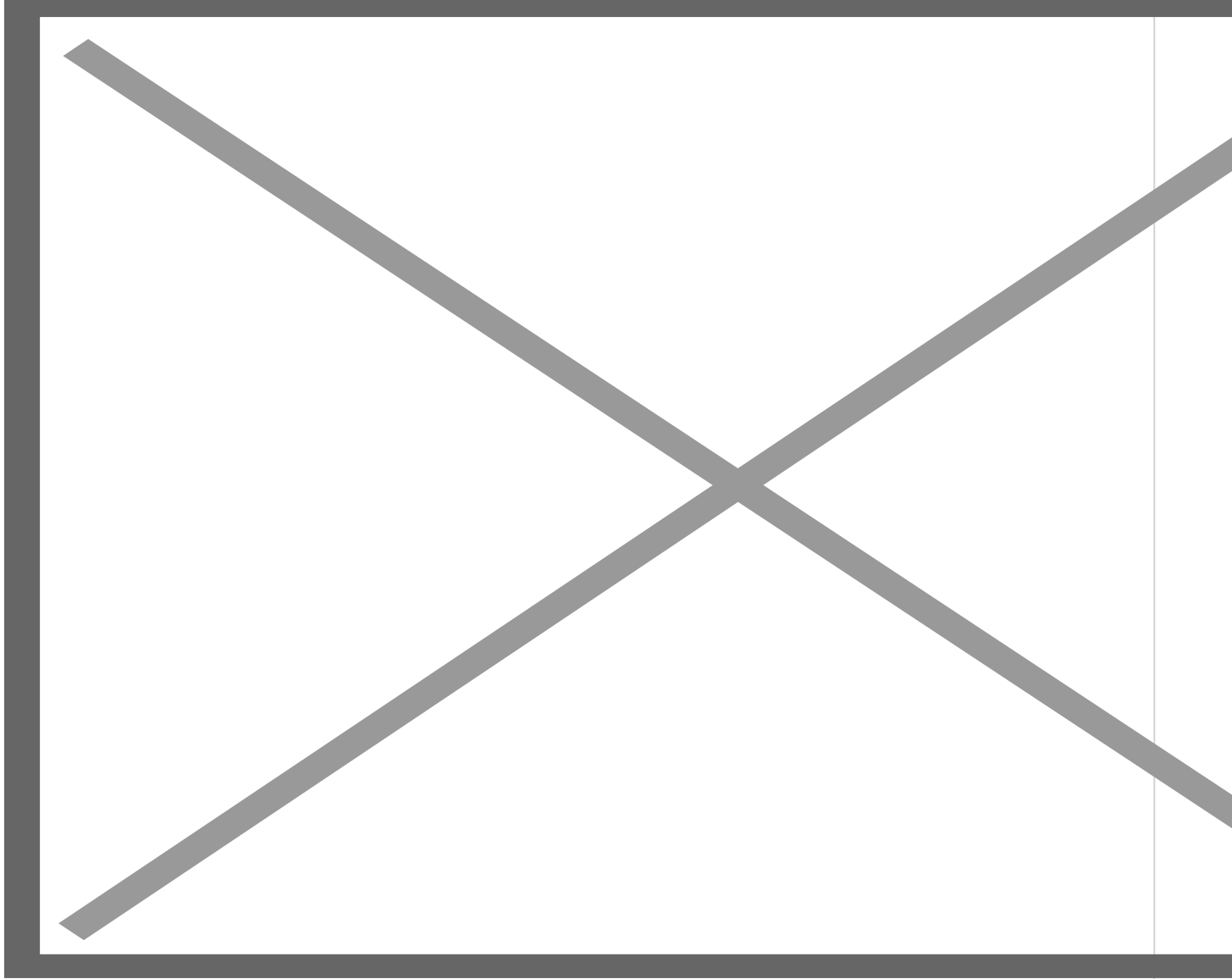


People before profits

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Hundreds of non-governmental organizations, political leaders, government leaders and Nobel Prize winners are engaged in an intense international campaign to make vaccines against COVID-19 a common good for all.

The main goal of this struggle, started by South Africa and India and supported by some 100 countries, is to halt the pandemic that is ravaging the world based on a fundamental but elusive principle, which is to put people's lives before the interests of the pharmaceutical transnationals.

To date, many rich countries, led by the United States and the major powers of the European Union, are developing campaigns to immunize their citizens because they have the resources to monopolize the preparations produced by the laboratories.

But in the rest of the world, even in middle- and high-income countries, things are different and some nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean have not bought a single batch, only a few people have been immunized so far as a result of donations.

While some governments expect to inoculate their entire population before the end of this year, others will be able to do it for 2024.

In order to remedy this situation, some of the regulations implemented by the World Trade Organization (WTO) must be modified, including the temporary suspension of the intellectual property rights of pharmaceutical companies.

This would allow a smooth distribution of the vaccine in countries that have the ability to produce their own doses, that is to say, to achieve what activists call "A People's Vaccine."

The United States and its allies oppose this measure and the matter will be discussed again at a WTO meeting on May 5th. For this reason, more than one hundred personalities addressed a letter to the current occupant of the White House, Joe Biden, where they remind him that the economy will only recover when COVID-19 disappears once and for all, and not only in a few nations.

"If this past year has taught us anything, it is that threats to public health are global," the authors of the letter emphasized, adding that "the market cannot adequately address these challenges, nor can narrow nationalism."

The world was relieved when news of vaccines against this coronavirus came out, but only to discover right away that these preparations would serve not so much to save lives, but to increase the already enormous profits of a few transnationals.

It is time to change the game and put people before profits!

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