**COVID-19 Patent Waiver: what’s next for the world & Africa?**

MSF Southern Africa, Health Justice Initiative and Section27 invite you to a briefing to unpack [the US administration’s support of waiving intellectual property protections for COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.sabcnews.com/sabcnews/president-ramaphosa-welcomes-us-decision-to-formally-back-vaccine-ip-rights-waiver/) and getting to grips with the road that lies ahead at the World Trade Organization negotiations to ensure expanded access saves lives.

We hope this webinar will provide some much needed perspective and background for journalists following developments.

**JOIN US**

**11:00 – 12:30 FRIDAY 7 May**

**(**[**WEBINAR LINK**](https://zoom.us/j/93116570584?pwd=dzhmcU1TZG1IZmVyRFV1dEhsblp1QT09)**)**

JOIN: <https://zoom.us/j/93116570584?pwd=dzhmcU1TZG1IZmVyRFV1dEhsblp1QT09>

**MEETING ID: 931 1657 0584**

**PASSCODE: 424282**

**Panelists:**

* Fatima Hassan, Director of Health Justice Initiative
* Yuan Qiong Hu, Policy co-coordinator MSF Access Campaign
* Umunyana Rugege, Director of Section 27

*Following the remarks by our panellists, we will host a Questions & Answers session for journalists and attendees who want to address specific issues.*

**Why is this important now?**

The US’ support of the waiver is a crucial step towards overcoming legal and other barriers to increasing sufficient, timely and more equitable access to lifesaving medical tools while COVID-19 ravages countries across the globe.

Many of the low-income countries where MSF operates have only received 0.3 percent of global COVID-19 vaccine supply.  The longer it takes to vaccinate everyone in the world, the greater the risk to us all as new variants take hold.

However, it is crucial that this waiver not just apply to preventative COVID-19 vaccines, but it should also cover other medical tools for COVID-19, including treatments and diagnostics, as originally proposed by India and South Africa at the WTO 8 months ago.

While negotiations still need to proceed civil society must maintain pressure on Australia, Brazil, Canada, EU member states, Japan and the UK, who continue to block the waiver.

It is also essential that as well as patents being lifted, pharmaceutical companies need to be encouraged to share their technical know-how so that more low- and middle-income countries can produce more vaccines.

**We cannot afford to wait again like the world did during HIV/AIDS crisis when it took years for patents to be lifted on life saving medical tools - lives are on the line!**