Covid-19 vaccine/ CC0 Hakan Nural

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EU must tackle lack of vaccine solidarity

EFA President calls for lifting intellectual property rights on vaccines to address vaccine inequality

MEPs have been debating the EU's response to the latest developments in the Covid-19 pandemic, ahead of a summit of EU leaders in Brussels later this week.

EFA MEP **Jordi Solé** intervened in the debate to highlight the dangers of vaccine inequality, and pointed to the alarming disparity between vaccine rates in high-income and low income-countries.

He supported calls for a temporary waiver of intellectual property rights for the Covid 19 vaccines in order to speed up production and tackle vaccine inequality, arguing that 'no one would truly be safe until everyone is safe.'

Speaking in the debate, EFA Group President **Jordi Solé** said:

"We were already warned of the dangers of vaccine inequality. We already knew that, in an interconnected world like ours, no one would be truly safe until everyone is safe. The longer it takes to achieve high rates of vaccination on a global scale, the greater the likelihood that virus mutations become more dangerous and more resistant to existing vaccines."

"When we look at real numbers, the comparison between vaccination rates in high-income countries and low-income ones, particularly Africa, is frightening. They tell us about a moral failure. While many people here are getting their third jab, 85% of people in Africa haven't got even one dose yet."

Jordi Solé added:

"Lack of real solidarity will only make this pandemic last longer. We need to expand faster vaccine supply and open up production to developing countries, while also fighting against the other pandemic, the disinformation pandemic.

"As this parliament has called for, a temporary lifting of intellectual property rights on COVID-19 vaccines would make vaccine production more global, faster and cheaper. We are now entering the third year of our lives with Covid. It is about time to look at the pandemic as a global reality and to vaccines as a global public

good. It is time to learn the right lessons from this pandemic and be better prepared when others come."

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Jordi Solé

Member

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