



**The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya
United Nations Security Council
2021-2022**

**STATEMENT AS DELIVERED BY H.E AMB. RAYCHELLE OMAMO, SC, EGH
CABINET SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KENYA DURING THE BRIEFING ON THE MAINTENANCE OF
INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: FOLLOW-UP ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOLUTION 2532 (2020).**

WEDNESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2021 (10:00 AM)

Excellencies,

1. May I at the onset, congratulate you, Rt Honourable Dominic Raab, on the assumption of the United Kingdom to the Presidency for the month of February. I also commend you for including in your Programme of Work, this timely briefing that affords us the opportunity to consider the role of this Council and the United Nations at large, in ensuring equitable, affordable and timely access to COVID-19 vaccines, particularly, in contexts affected by conflict and security.

Mr. President,

2. The COVID-19 pandemic has thrust upon the whole world unprecedented health, socio-economic and security challenges that continue to unfold. Implications of the pandemic are particularly serious for the African continent in which a number of zones of fragility, and conflict exist and other pervasive health challenges such as HIV/AIDS, malaria and Ebola continue to plague our populations.
3. The COVID -19 pandemic has strained humanitarian aid flows; exposed vulnerable groups such as women and children in conflict areas to further risks; it has eroded peace building initiatives and threatens to reverse critical development gains made by countries in transition or undergoing post-conflict reconstruction. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic is more than

a health crisis. It is an existential challenge to global human and economic development and an acute threat to global peace and security. The pandemic therefore demands that this Council leads the way in articulating a human-security based approach to the vexing issues surrounding equitable access to Corona virus vaccines. A new urgency is required to mobilize global responsibility and action to protect lives.

4. I salute the immense efforts made by the international community in the development of COVID-19 vaccines. However, this optimism is threatened by significant realities which perpetuate inequality and exclusion in our world. These include, the prohibitive cost of vaccines, limited vaccine supplies and manufacturing deficiencies, increased export restrictions on vaccines and their ingredients, the emergence of viral mutations and the erosion of global solidarity through the hoarding of vaccines, together with vaccine nationalism and opaque bilateral vaccine deals.
5. My delegation therefore welcomes the role of COVAX. This facility that is multilateral in nature to facilitate the rapid and fair distribution of corona virus vaccines. It is gratifying that up to 5% of the COVAX doses are reserved as part of a “humanitarian buffer” to be used for missed or neglected populations such as refugees and asylum seekers. We urge the extension of this element of the facility to populations affected by conflict and insecurity.
6. To further facilitate equitable and timely access to vaccines, which we view as a global public good, there is an urgent need to democratize and scale up local production and manufacturing capability, especially on the African continent, through partnerships, technology transfer and the suspension of barriers related to intellectual property. We therefore reiterate our support for the African Union Assembly Decision made at its 34th Ordinary Session on the 7th of February 2021, calling for the temporary waiver of certain TRIPS Agreement obligations for the prevention, containment and treatment of the COVID – 19.

Mr. President,

7. Along with these proposals and with a view to facilitating vaccine delivery in fragile and conflict affected regions, we believe that the Security Council should:

- a. First, renew its demand under Resolution 2532 for a general and immediate cessation of hostilities all situations on its agenda and call upon all parties in armed conflicts to engage immediately in a durable humanitarian pause;
 - b. Second, Incorporate humanitarian curve-outs in its sanction's regimes for this purpose;
 - c. Thirdly, mandate its field operations including peace operation missions to facilitate the safe delivery of vaccines, assist local communities in community sensitization and also ensure the timely vaccination of peacekeepers and UN humanitarian personnel in the field.
 - d. Fourth, call for increased financial support to the COVAX facility as well as increased support to countries experiencing conflict and those hosting large populations of refugees.
8. In closing Mr. President may we reiterate our call for collaborative human sensitive action and solidarity. In this regard we applaud the concerted continental and regional actions taken by the African Union in response to the pandemic. These examples ought to be emulated at global level.

Mr. President

9. Kenya is also pleased to have assisted the United Nations in establishing a COVID-19 treatment centre in Nairobi to provide critical care to UN peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel across our continent. In the spirit of further cooperation, Kenya recommends continued dialogue between this Council and countries in conflict, countries hosting refugees and humanitarian agencies to improve response to COVID-19 and other emerging security challenges in a more effective and coordinated manner. We look forward to your support in this.

I thank you.