

February 24, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
[pm@pm.gc.ca](mailto:pm@pm.gc.ca)

Dear Prime Minister:

We write to you today to express our deep concern that access to the COVID-19 vaccine is unequal. While wealthy countries have secured doses of the vaccine, other countries and populations have inadequate or no access at all.

We share with you a recent letter from the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), Rev. Dr. Martin Junge, *Open letter to the Leaders of the G7* (attached).

The pandemic has highlighted multiple forms of deep inequality in the world, states Rev. Dr. Junge in his letter. *“The unequal access to vaccines reveals once again the immense inequality in the world, now even exacerbated by COVID-19. A global approach driven by ‘vaccine nationalism’ cannot work because until all are safe, no one is.”* Equal access to the vaccine is essential to public health and everyone’s well being. In Canada and around the world, leaders need to give due consideration to vulnerable people and actively address systemic inequities.

We echo the LWF’s call to:

- Redouble your efforts to financially support the development and distribution of vaccines to developing countries whose limited resources undermine their ability to acquire and provide vaccination to all its citizens. This includes the provision of adequate funding towards initiatives such as COVAX.
- Address the challenges related to research, development and sharing of technology and intellectual property rights in the context of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics.

Canada has a moral responsibility to offer leadership and support for the global battle against the COVID-19 pandemic. We call on you to help support fair and equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccine for all.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan C. Johnson", with a small cross symbol to the left.

The Rev. Susan C. Johnson  
National Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karin Achtelstetter", written in a cursive style.

The Rev. Karin Achtelstetter  
Executive Director, Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR)

cc. The Honourable Erin O'Toole, Leader of the Official Opposition  
The Honourable Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the NDP  
The Honourable Yves-François Blanchet, Leader of the Bloc Québécois  
Annamie Paul, Leader of the Green Party  
ELCIC National Church Council  
CLWR Board  
LWF General Secretary