

The Bishops of the Church of England are backing calls for the leaders of the world's richest countries to halt the "hoarding" of COVID-19 vaccines while billions of people around the world have yet to be jabbed.

Members of the College of Bishops, which is meeting in Oxford, voted unanimously to endorse a [statement by two Anglican Communion bodies](#) which demands an emergency meeting of the G7 to commit to vaccine equity.

It warns that potentially millions of vaccines stockpiled by wealthy countries could go to waste after passing their effective "use by" date rather than be shared with those in urgent need.

Earlier this year G7 leaders meeting in Cornwall promised to donate more than one billion doses of vaccine but it is estimated that less than 15 per cent of these have so far materialised.

World leaders, who are attending the UN General Assembly in New York this week, are expected to decide tomorrow whether to call an emergency G7 meeting to address the issue.

Following the vote at the College of Bishops, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has written to the UN Secretary General António Guterres in support of the call.



The statement, drawn up by the [Anglican Health and Community Network](#) and the [Anglican Alliance](#) notes that the vast majority of doses administered so far have been in high and upper-middle income countries - while across Africa vaccination coverage is estimated at just two per cent.

"Even as booster jabs are given and over-12s vaccinated, rich nations are still on track to amass an excess of one billion vaccines by the end of the year," the statement warns.

“This excess will only increase in 2022 as global vaccine manufacturing increases. Rich nations must not hoard the surpluses amassed – but must share.

“The lives and health of millions around the world are at risk, alongside the threat of new variants emerging globally.”

It concludes: “We are one human family.

“We can and must work together to end this pandemic, leaving no one behind.”



The Bishop of Hertford, Michael Beasley, who is an epidemiologist and a Co-Convenor of the Anglican Health & Community Network, brought the statement to the College of Bishops to ask for their support.

He said: “Our archbishops and bishops have spoken unanimously to add their voices to calls for the G7 countries urgently to meet to address the issues of rich nations’ hoarding and wastage of vaccines.

“We ask the G7 leaders to find ways to recognise that we are one world and to share vaccines so that no one will be left behind.”

The full statement can be found below.

**From the Anglican Health & Community Network and Anglican Alliance**

We ask the governments of the G7 countries to address global issues of hoarding and wastage of COVID vaccines by convening an emergency meeting of the G7.

Globally, over 5.5 billion vaccine doses have now been administered, but 80% have been administered in high-and upper-middle income countries. Meanwhile, Africa's vaccination coverage is at 2%.

Even as booster jabs are given and over 12s vaccinated, rich nations are still on track to amass an excess of 1 billion vaccines by the end of the year. This excess will only increase in 2022 as global vaccine manufacturing increases. Rich nations must not hoard the surpluses amassed – but must share.

The lives and health of millions around the world are at risk, alongside the threat of new variants emerging globally.

Vaccines have 'use by' dates. If not put into people's arms, significant parts of the excess being generated will need to be destroyed. It is a matter of extreme concern that if not shared, hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of vaccines that have been purchased by rich nations will go to waste.

We recognise the support of the G7 governments for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) and the commitments made at the G7 summit in June 2021 to make available additional doses. High income countries have promised to donate more than 1 billion doses, but less than 15% of these have so far materialised.

We call on all G7 governments and others to fulfil their promises and commit fully to global vaccine equity. National vaccine surpluses must be equitably and effectively shared, with waste avoided and lives saved.

We are one human family. We can and must work together to end this pandemic, leaving no one behind.

**Revd Canon Rachel Carnegie**, Executive Director, Anglican Alliance

**Rt Revd Michael Beasley**, Bishop of Hertford, Church of England

**Dr Janice Tsang**, Specialist in Medical Oncology, Hong Kong

**Rt Revd Luke Pato**, Bishop of Namibia, Church of Southern Africa

● Co-Convenors, Anglican Health & Community Network

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