

5th Sunhak Peace Prize Award Ceremony: Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (Gavi)

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To receive this prize on behalf of the Gavi Alliance is a great honor. Making the world better for future generations is a shared goal. I'd like to commend Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon for your tireless work, turning this ambition into a reality. Your creation of this prestigious award has done so much to shine a light on those working to improve the world we live in.

Of course, for us at the Vaccine Alliance, making the world better means improving the health of hundreds of millions of the world's children, protecting them, and more recently, their parents, against deadly diseases, through vaccination.

It means helping to ensure everybody, no matter where they are born, has an equal chance at a healthy future. By improving health equitably across the world, we can help foster stable, prosperous and peaceful societies. Good health is the bedrock on which prosperity can be built. A healthier society is a wealthier society, and from this prosperity comes stability and peace. Time and time again, history shows us that broken economies lead to nationalism, to crisis and to conflict. Of course, right now we are seeing this interplay between health, economics and stability play out in real time around the world, and the COVID-19 pandemic has cost the global economy trillions of dollars on top of the millions of lives lost. The global political landscape has never look more fragile.

We can defeat this global pandemic and end its economic toll but only by working together. The spirit of partnership and multilateralism embodied by the Sunhak Peace Prize Foundation and the distinguished laureates up until now has also been embodied by Gavi since its creation in 2000.



We are an alliance, a partnership encompassing international organizations like the WHO and UNICEF, civil society, vaccine manufacturers, donor-governments and the governments of the countries we exist to serve. This partnership has achieved incredible results. Our alliance now helps to immunize nearly half the world's children against diseases from measles to diphtheria, pneumonia to polio.

Over the past two decades, we've immunized more than 900 million additional children, reducing vaccine preventable diseases by seventy percent, contributing to a more than fifty percent reduction in child mortality in the lower-income countries we serve.

However, COVID-19 has put this progress at risk. 2020 saw vaccine rates drop in lower-income countries for the first time in decades, due to fear and lockdowns as well as the fact that health systems were forced to turn their focus and attention to the pandemic. Our alliance is working hard with countries to get routine immunizations back on track, but of course the best way to reduce the impact of the pandemic is to bring it to an end.

To help do this, we've brought decades of experience to bear on the creation of a multi-lateral solution to this pandemic. Alongside CEPI (Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations) and UNICEF, we have produced a true world's first in COVAX. For the first time we have a platform through which the world can come together to ensure fair, equitable access to vaccines for every country and every population during a pandemic.

As a multilateral solution for a global crisis, COVAX works. In the twelve months since our first doses were administered, we have delivered more than a billion doses of WHO-approved COVID-19 vaccines around the world. Ninety percent of these doses went to lower-income countries at no cost to them. Thanks to an incredible effort from our COVAX partners, governments and an army of vaccinators and health workers around the world, COVAX vaccines are now reaching people in every corner of the world, from the Sahara to the peaks of the Himalayas.

Of course, the pandemic is far from over. 2022 will be another challenging year. But we've proved that a multi-lateral solution to this pandemic can work. With further support, we can fulfill COVAX's mission to end vaccine inequality and end the pain and suffering that COVID has brought to so many of us. I'd like to also take this opportunity to thank the Republic of Korea, who has been so supportive of Gavi's core missions since 2010 and last year made an historic \$200,000,000 contribution to COVAX, helping us to procure vaccines for countries most in need.

We are deeply grateful for this support. I accept this prize as just one representative of an alliance that encompasses, not just the Gavi Secretariat in Geneva, but also hundreds of thousands of partners. Immunization managers and health workers across the world working day and night to ensure vaccines reach the vulnerable and helping to forge a better, healthier more prosperous future for all of us. On behalf of all of us at the Vaccine Alliance, I thank you.

