

**RELEASE**

# **ACCESS TO TREATMENT AND MEDICINE FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV**

Covid-19 is considered one of the largest pandemics the world has experienced in the last century. The governments of our region have implemented the confinement of people by decreeing different types of quarantines. This situation has not only created a severe economic crisis, but it has also brought a negative impact on diverse populations and has worsened the conditions of vulnerability that affects and undermines the rights of people, with an emphasis on the most disadvantaged.

Those of us living with HIV have insisted that governments cannot fail to guarantee our right to health in the context of the current sanitary crisis. Securing access to services, treatments, and confidentiality are essential requirements to avoid deepening the health problems we face today.

With social distancing measures and mobility restrictions, the challenges in ensuring access to ARVs for people living with HIV have increased. Attention centers have closed or been reduced; production has stopped due to the closure of plants or lack of supplies; purchases or delivery times have been delayed in the various countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. In some cases, we simply cannot go out in search of medical attention.

For all of the above, we once again remind governments that health is our right. We cannot face the current COVID-19 pandemic by neglecting the rest of the existing problems or undermining people's rights. In that tenor, we demand:

1. A guarantee of the continuity of medical and health services for people living with HIV and maintaining the stock of ARV drugs to respond to demand.
2. Multi-month dispensing and community delivery of ARVs to limit the mobility of people living with HIV and reduce COVID-19 infections, as well as guaranteeing treatment on time.
3. Optimized use of ARV stocks and WHO preferred and alternative schemes that provide modernization in ART, contributing to the reduction of non-adherence to the drug.

4. Regional and global coordination with drug manufacturers and other partners to guarantee early deliveries and emergency purchases to combat shortages, using TRIPS flexibilities.

5. Donations and loans between countries, with the support of partners and donors, and any other measure of cooperation and regional agreements that help the countries have equitable conditions of response to the current emergency.

For these and many more reasons, we cannot allow the progress made in the last decade in the area of HIV to have a setback from which we cannot return. We call on our partners, country representatives, activists, and allies to raise their voices and demand that each of the decision-makers, ministries of health, and legislatures pay special attention to the calls described above.

## **¡NO REGRESSION TO OUR HEALTH RIGHTS WILL BE ACCEPTED!**

