

**Press release**

**Institutional investors take action: vaccine equity no longer optional**

Zeist, 6 January 2022 – A group of over 65 leading institutional investors is calling on Covid-19 vaccine manufacturers to move quickly to increase the availability and deployment of vaccinations around the world. An *Investor Statement* has been drawn up to that end under the leadership of Achmea Investment Management. Letters have been sent to pharmaceutical companies asking them to make the global availability of vaccines part of the remuneration policy of managers and directors. In this way, investors want to hold them accountable for their contribution to solving this problem.

In addition to Achmea Investment Management, the group comprises among others: BMO, Storebrand, Nomura and Candriam. In total, more than 65 asset managers, pension funds and insurers have joined the initiative. Overall, the group represents total assets of €3000 billion.

**The World Health Organisation (WHO) has outlined a clear path**

Access to affordable vaccination around the world is vital to combatting the pandemic from both the humanitarian and economic viewpoints. The WHO has outlined a clear path:

- a. Prioritise and fulfil COVAX and AVAT contracts as a matter of urgency.
- b. Provide full transparency on production and manufacturing schedules and the planned and actual distribution of Covid-19 vaccines to low-income countries.
- c. Engage with countries with high vaccination coverage to optimise global deliveries and sharing of vaccines.
- d. Commit to sharing know-how, licensing and production facilities to ensure future vaccine supply is reliable, affordable, available and deployed to every country.

The group of institutional investors led by Achmea Investment Management is calling on pharmaceutical companies to make these WHO targets part of their remuneration policy. Rogier Krens, Chief Investment Officer of Achmea Investment Management says: *“We will only be able to get this pandemic under control by working together. Our view is that pharmaceutical companies have a duty to do their utmost on this but unfortunately we see that they are lagging behind. In addition, the business case is clear: new variants threaten the recovery of economies around the world”.*

Servaas Michielssens, Senior Fund Manager Biotechnology Healthcare at Candriam adds: *“As responsible investors we believe innovation in healthcare and medicine is paramount to support human health, and that in order to optimise its impact, there must be worldwide access, particularly in response to a global pandemic. Linking executive remuneration within pharmaceutical companies to equitable pricing and distribution is an important and material step and should certainly be considered as relevant beyond vaccine producers.”*

Meg Jones-Monteiro, Program Director – Health Equity at Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility agrees: *“ICCR members have long advocated for equitable access to therapeutics and vaccines, which both expands access to markets and minimizes the reputational and regulatory risk that have long-term implications for shareholder value. Equitable access to Covid-19 products is no exception. Integration of the WHO goals into the executive remuneration strategy in a meaningful, material, measurable and transparent way is one step towards meeting this goal.”*

This *Investor Statement* follows up the previous statement of April 2020 in which pharmaceutical companies were asked to join forces and do their utmost to minimise the spread of the virus and its consequences. Vaccines have now been developed but the group of investors has concluded that vaccination rates in less developed countries are still too low and further steps by pharmaceutical companies and governments are needed.

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**Enclosures:**

- letter/investor statement of 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2022.
- [Investor statement April 2020](#)

**For more information:**

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**About Achmea Investment Management:**

Achmea Investment Management is a leading player in the Dutch fiduciary and asset management market. Via robust portfolio construction, effective asset management, responsible investing and thoughtful risk management our goal is to create more capital for our pension fund clients to meet their obligations. We operate with a professional and dedicated team of over 300 professionals.

Achmea Investment Management is an independent division of Achmea, a solid, non-listed Dutch insurance group with a cooperative tradition and a PRI signatory. We have supported pension funds in the Netherlands with tailored solutions for over 60 years. We manage assets of over € 201 billion for customers.

More information: [www.achmeainvestmentmanagement.nl](http://www.achmeainvestmentmanagement.nl)