

OPEN LETTER TO HEALTHCARE WORKERS AROUND THE WORLD

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Dear Comrades:

Coronavirus has consumed much of our resources, our energies and at large our own. Without your backing, this pandemic would be like going to war without soldiers, fielding bombs at empty bunkers and having snipers but missing targets time and again. This pandemic has served to tell our generation that healthcare is too serious a discipline to be left in the hands of politicians alone.

In this war against coronavirus, we have lost our civilians and our soldiers especially those with co-morbidities and other illnesses who have got exposed and succumbed to their illness. We have been exposed to how accountability and integration stands at the very heart of human development and the consequences of not doing so. Many powerful voices today have argued that our lack of investment inefficiency and investment insufficiency in healthcare have placed the world at unacceptable risks for our modern age. Institutions have been accused and countries blamed, at times even governments. They must be held accountable for every bit, for putting you through a tireless and terrible situation our age has witnessed. As months pass by, nations around the world have yet again pinned it on hope which only healthcare providers across the world can do.

You be may a treating clinician, you may be a community health physician, you may be a public health professional, you may be an epidemiologist, you may be a nurse, you may be a researcher, you may be a healthcare technician or anyone working in the discipline of healthcare directly or laterally. Please remember, no matter who you are, where you come from, what language you speak or what religion you practice, you are doing a very important job on earth at a crucial time. You are doing God's work on earth and I remain a proud admirer of you and a participating actor in the missions.

I write to you as a free child of this world, as a global citizen who believes in one health and since I am not bound by diplomatic niceties or protocols, it is possible that I can speak my mind to talk about the constituency of the neglected sector of healthcare.



Friends, we represent one planet and we aspire for a common future, a more inclusive well-being that represents one destiny. It is therefore necessary and urgent to build this destiny together. Many

Governments have not focused on healthcare, because healthcare was never an election agenda and we have a moral obligation to make it one for all of the ages. The problem of hubris, not investing, not listening and not learning through acts of governance has led to the fruit of lockdowns, free falling economies and internal frustration many souls didn't deserve. And as healthcare workers we continue to witness the insanity in futile submission.

The coronavirus pandemic is our moment to mainstream healthcare around the world, make it a diplomatic priority, enkindle a new spirit of pro-health, of responsibility, of service where we force Governments to resolve to invest more, work harder to not just build communities, but also build healthcare workers, ensure their safety and create world class public hospitals inspite of limitations. This is not a project of a decade, but a mission of a lifetime, which if we start now, coming generations will be grateful because we lived. Imagine, how beautiful it would be to witness a new generation of planetary health rise to heights of greatness and splendour, of safety and security, filled with hope and not heartache.

Healthcare must no longer be an ideal inspired by any one leader, one nation, one agency or any one Non-Government Organization. The future of healthcare must be defined by a moral collective of stakeholders as diverse as can be and as small or big as can be, provided they have the mind and heart and willingness to work hard.

I hope that all of you who have this great advantage to be a healthcare provider in this darkest time of our life, will continue to do what you do with much greater fervour and mark your contribution on this planet. It is a matter of special privilege to add beauty and inject hope through healthcare in the lives of everyone, everywhere around the world. Every patient provides us with two questions, the first is "what can we do for the patient" and the second is "what can we learn from the patient." Importantly, the manner in which healthcare has been conducted through organized chaos around the world to counter the pandemic has raised many important questions to which only you my dear colleague can answer.

You hold in your mortal hands the power to save lives, celebrate freedom, abolish divide and build equity and equality through a new and renewed social collective. Healthcare has never been stethoscope and pills. Healthcare must be viewed through a social, commercial, legal and importantly endemic determinant of healthcare perspective. Healthcare has the roots of origin in medicine, in culture, in race, in spirituality, in economics, in physics, in chemistry and in biology. Healthcare cannot be de-linked with anything on earth and therefore, in my opinion, you become the most celebrated hero of our generation.

Remember, you may never get an Oscar award, you may never feature on prime-time news story, your government may disown you when you retire, but you will live in the hearts of people, in the minds of men and women who respect and see you as a beacon of hope.

As a healthcare provider attempting to build communities as a social collective, I have stumbled on every block, faced number of hurdles, seen many disappointments, but the courage to keep going is found in the eyes of those who have no smile left to offer at the end of the day. The inspiration to do more is found in embracing and creating a healthy society who does not know how it must be saved. The feeling of doing something for the most vulnerable is something I cannot put into words but only appreciate in the remembering.

It was evident that someday medicine has to become a science which worked to prevent diseases than to treat them alone, this day has arrived. 2020 is the year which should change the way medicine is seen, viewed and approached. The entire world is obligated to take interest in preventive healthcare and public health. We as healthcare providers are entrusted to heal the world and organize public health in the most magnificent way possible.

Remember always, the pride of serving our country and her people is more important than mere income, the gratitude of people who go back from the doors they enter the hospital is much more permanent than anything else.

Let us recognise that, people in communities and patients in hospital have been our greatest source of wisdom and learning, and we also have a moral obligation to give back to those very people from whom we learn.

If you don't want to be forgotten after the pandemic gets controlled, thanks to your own hard-work, then you must do more than just treat patients, you must volunteer, you must mainstream the agenda of healthcare, you must raise your voice in solidarity, not with political leanings, but by pushing the governments to act responsibly, always and forever. Our aspirations on earth are common, our future certain. In the interest of humanity, our generation must see the world liberated and we must achieve affordable and universal health coverage in our lifetime. May we rise as one army to fight the battle against disease and death? We must.