Dear Dr. Stoffels,

Congratulations on receiving an Emergency Use Authorization for Ad26.COV2.S. We are writing to urge Johnson & Johnson to share vaccine technology widely with manufacturers around the world to help quickly ramp up global production.

A single-dose vaccine that is easy to transport can play an important role in vaccinating the world. However, J&J currently projects to produce 1 billion doses in 2021. A new partnership with Merck is expected to increase capacity but details and timelines remain unclear. J&J also has reportedly promised only 200 million doses for the developing world through COVAX by the end of the year. Production problems have already slowed delivery.

We urge you, at minimum, to meet the sharing standard set by your peers. J&J and AstraZeneca/Oxford (AZ-OX) both employ replication-defective viral vector technology. But J&J has entered into a fraction of global partnerships as AZ-OX. According to UNICEF, AZ-OX have entered into manufacturing agreements with 21 partners. J&J has entered into agreements with 8, including Merck. More than 10 partners are producing AZ-OX drug substance. Only 3 are producing J&J drug substance. These differences amount to hundreds of millions of doses.

J&J should share technology, intellectual property, and know-how with the World Health Organization. The COVID-19 Technology Access Pool is a platform that would help manufacturers from around the

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1 https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/03/02/merck-johnson-and-johnson-covid-vaccine-partnership/
2 Id.
3 https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/13/health/covid-vaccine-johnson-johnson.html
5 J&J uses adenovirus type 26 vector and PER.C6 cell line. AZ-OX uses a modified chimpanzee virus, ChAdOx1, and HEK-293 cell line. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7423510/
6 https://www.unicef.org/supply/covid-19-vaccine-market-dashboard
7 Emergent Biosolutions, Biological E, Merck, Sanofi, Catalent, Grand Asceoptic, Reig Jofre, Aspen Pharma. https://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF02/20210223/111226/HHRG-117-IF02-Wstate-NettlesR-20210223.PDF
8 https://twitter.com/sandyddouglas/status/1355838719295684617
9 Emergent Biosolutions, Biological E, and Merck. https://docs.house.gov/meetings/IF/IF02/20210223/111226/HHRG-117-IF02-Wstate-NettlesR-20210223.PDF
world quickly ramp up production. A recent AP investigation found multiple manufacturers with spare capacity to produce hundreds of millions of doses.

J&J has a particular obligation to share because it has benefited enormously from public funding. BARDA has awarded J&J two billion dollars for the COVID-19 vaccine to pay for research and development, and for manufacturing 100 million doses. The NIH has also helped run late-stage clinical trials, and developed the stabilized spike protein technology used by Ad26.COV2.S. Public support for the technology platform also extends back many years. National Institutes of Health-funded researchers played a critical role in the development of the viral vector employed by J&J. NIH and BARDA helped bankroll an Ebola vaccine candidate that helped validate the platform, pouring in at least $250 million.

As the head of the WHO notes, “A restrictive approach to vaccine production is . . . more likely to prolong the pandemic—which would be tantamount to medical malpractice on a global scale.” Ad26.COV2.S. is one of a handful of technologies that has so far demonstrated protection against concerning new variants. We urge you to choose a better path.

Sincerely,

Peter Maybarduk
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10 https://www.who.int/initiatives/covid-19-technology-access-pool
14 https://projectreporter.nih.gov/ (noting that Harvard’s Dr. Dan Barouch is a principal investigator for adenovirus-related projects that received $132.9 million in NIH funding)
15 https://www.usaspending.gov/. HHSO100201500008C ($49.6 million so far); HHSO100201700013C ($125.3 million so far); HHSN27220080005C ($74.4 million so far).
16 https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/02/02/vaccine-nationalism-harms-everyone-and-protects-no-one/#