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Joint statement from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Knowledge Ecology International, and the People's Vaccine Alliance on the UN Human Rights Council's adoption by consensus of a resolution on *access to medicines, vaccines and other health products in the context of the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health*:

“This resolution sends another clear message that access to medicines and diagnostics, including COVID-19 vaccines, tests, and treatments, is a core component of the right to health and central to other fundamental human rights, including the right to life. It is yet another rebuke to the rich countries and pharmaceutical companies that have chosen to uphold monopolies on life-saving medicines despite the human cost, which on one estimate is a preventable COVID-19 death every minute. That is a violation of human rights.

“There were deliberate attempts from some states to water down the language of this resolution and the United Kingdom and the European Union initially pushed back on the principle of international solidarity. Yet the final resolution clearly states that health is a human right and that international cooperation must be the world's guiding principle for this pandemic and any future health crisis.

“This resolution, led by Global South countries, proposes a new way forward after the replication of 'colonial era racial hierarchies' in the global COVID-19 vaccine distribution was condemned by both the UN's committee and special rapporteur on racial discrimination. The text specifically calls for states to take all measures necessary to strengthen regional and local production of health products by promoting partnerships and technology transfers.

“Governments must live up to their human rights obligations as enshrined in several international human rights treaties and reinforced in this resolution. That means addressing the disproportionate impact of global health crises on marginalized groups, as well as fostering knowledge and technology transfer, and making full use of flexibilities in global intellectual property rules to adequately respond to and prepare for public health needs.”