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## Eve of Biden-Putin Geneva Summit: Swiss Nurses and ICN stand in solidarity calling for immediate action on global vaccination roll-out



**Geneva, Switzerland 15 June 2021** - As the eyes of the world turn to the Geneva Summit between Presidents Biden and Putin, Swiss nurses gathered in the city to remember the 115,000 or more health workers from around the world who have died because of the pandemic.

Swiss nurses from the Geneva section of the Swiss Nurses Association (SBK-ASI) alongside the International Council of Nurses (ICN) stood in solidarity with nurses across the globe who are still waiting for vaccinations. They called for nurses to be prioritized to save lives and prevent the spread of the virus.

President of the Geneva Section of SBK-ASI, [Patricia Borrero](#), said, "We are here today to express our solidarity for nurses all around the world who have suffered or even died from COVID-19. During the pandemic nurses have had to live with the fear of bringing the virus from their workplaces into their homes with the risk of infecting their families. Therefore, we urgently need to ensure that all our healthcare colleagues around the world are vaccinated without further delay. In Switzerland and certain other countries, we are fortunate to already

be vaccinated but we know that in many other countries very few nurses have been vaccinated. We support their right to be vaccinated and urge governments to act now.”

ICN President Annette Kennedy said, “ICN is honoured to welcome members of the Geneva section of the Swiss Nurses Association and joins together with them to renew our call for nurses and other health workers to be prioritized for COVID-19 vaccines around the world. We must care for the caregivers if we want to stop the spread of the virus, if not the world will remain at the mercy of this pandemic and others like it. Let’s also remember that global health requires global leadership and nurses must be at the centre, not just the deliverers of care but at every stage of healthcare policy-making.”

ICN CEO [Howard Catton](#) added, “Swiss nurses are global nurses, and they are here today to support ICN’s continued call for nurses around the world to be prioritised for vaccination. They are in Geneva to remind Presidents Biden and Putin and other world leaders that we have already lost 115,000 colleagues, nurses and other health workers, and the bottom line is the longer it takes to get the world to be vaccinated the more will die.

‘We hugely welcome the global commitments from world leaders to share more vaccines globally, but we need more, and we need them now. One billion is not enough when the World Health Organization puts the shortage at 11 billion.

‘We also require an action plan to get those 11 billion doses rolled out and into the arms of people who need them desperately and urgently, including nurses and other health workers. ICN has written to the G7 and the United Nations calling for leadership at the highest level to implement such a plan and ensure that nurse leadership is at its heart. The response to and future preparedness for pandemics is an issue of global safety and security and that is why we are urging Presidents Biden and Putin to work together and take a lead on a global response.”

ICN has pledged its support to the WHO Vaccine Equity campaign and to COVAX. ICN also applauds President Biden’s pledge to donate 500 million vaccine doses to the world’s poorest countries, but stresses that global leaders must do more.

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#### **Note to Editors**

The **International Council of Nurses** (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.

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