

INTERNATIONAL ONLINE CONFERENCE CALL FOR PAPERS

Theme:

AFRICAN STATES AND THE SCRAMBLING FOR THE COVID-19 VACCINE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Date:

30-31 March 2021

The critical challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to science, governments and societies can be explored across a range of academic disciplines. These challenges vary in important ways across geographical, political and social contexts. As the African continent faced a possible public health crisis, scientists, research institutes, pharmaceutical giants, and some African states, especially Senegal, Nigeria, Egypt and South Africa were in an initial rush to develop effective vaccines that target the pathogen, SARS-CoV-2, and to develop efficacious drugs to treat the disease. But evidence (African Union 2020; WHO 2020; Nkengasong 2020) shows that the COVID-19 disease is an unprecedented global health challenge that can only be met with unprecedented cooperation between governments, researchers, manufacturers, and multilateral partners in the production of vaccines. Given this, the African Union endorsed the establishment of a multilateral framework for African states to engage actively in the development and access to COVID-19 vaccines.

The rationale behind the African Union's endorsement is borne out of the fact that Africa has always been relegated to the back seat during inventions of, and access to, new technologies including the production of new vaccines. For instance, according to the African Academy of Sciences, only 2% of clinical trials on COVID-19 vaccines conducted worldwide occur in Africa. This certainly is capable of undermining equitable and quick access to the COVID-19 vaccines by Africans. The fear that Africa may not quickly have access to the COVID-19 vaccines is well documented in the preliminary results from three candidate vaccines, which have bolstered global confidence that there is an end in sight to the pandemic. The results showed that not all of these vaccines are appropriate for a roll out in African contexts. The cold temperatures required for the storage and distribution of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines would make them a challenge to distribute in Africa quickly. This constitutes a huge challenge to the African states, considering that the second wave of the pandemic is already underway in the continent. This invariably exacerbates tendencies of unhealthy scrambling for the COVID-19 vaccines among the Africa states and raises concerns for strained diplomatic relations among them. There is the concern that after wealthier African countries start their vaccination campaigns following huge cash commitments for the procurement of the vaccines, airlines and countries will require vaccine certificates for travel which will present a challenge for poorer African populations who may not have access to vaccines.

In the scramble for vaccines, countries can act alone – creating a few winners and many losers. It is therefore predictable that Africa, unlike other continents, would be the last to get full access to the vaccines. While Africa has played a front role in the treatment and production of vaccines for a range of outbreaks of emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases (ebola, Lassa fever, chikungunya fever, monkeypox, etc.), how the COVID-19 pandemic has evolved necessitates critical inquiry on vaccine production and distribution from African perspectives.

This conference is convened to provoke honest and robust discussions and assessments of equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccines by African states. It aims to evaluate strategies adopted by these states to deal with this challenge and the evolution of alternative practical solutions to the pandemic through local African vaccines and indigenous knowledge (IK). Papers are invited from policymakers, practitioners, academics, researchers, civil society actors, development partners, government functionaries and postgraduate students across the continent and beyond on the following conference themes and sub-themes:

- Theoretical issues and perspectives to COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;

- The political economy of COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;
- North-South distrust in respect to the COVID-19 vaccine;
- African climatic variability and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines;
- Indigenous Knowledge Systems and COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;
- The curricula, educational system and the production of COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;
- COVID-19 vaccines, migration and diplomatic relations in Africa;
- Gender and accessibility to COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;
- African traditional institutions and equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;
- COVID-19 vaccines and the plight of African states in the control of the pandemic;
- Development partners and collaborations in the COVID-19 vaccines production in Africa;
- Human rights issues in the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;
- The media and the COVID-19 vaccines in Africa;
- African states and challenges of the COVID-19 vaccines;
- The role of African research institutions in the development of COVID-19 vaccines;
- African belief, customs, and cultural sentiments towards the COVID-19 vaccines;
- Information Communications Technologies (ICTs) and the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines in Africa.

Race relations and COVID-19 vaccinations

Papers that are well researched and original with clear methodological and theoretical perspectives of not less than 6, 000 words are expected from participants. Abstracts, including keywords and short bio(s) of author(s) not exceeding 300 words, should be sent to the e-mail accounts below.

Important dates:

05 March 2021: Deadline for abstracts' submission

12 March 2021: Announcement of abstracts' decisions

26 March 2021: Full papers are due for submission

30-31 March 2021: Conference

Conference Fees:

International participants: \$250

South African participants: R3700

Submission of Abstracts:

Havilahglo14@gmail.com or info@havilahglo.co.za

Website: www.havilahglo.co.za

Publication Opportunities

Accepted papers presented at the conference will be submitted for multi-peer review and possible publication in any of the relevant four journals or a conference proceedings/edited book that will be coordinated by Professor Lere Amusan and Prof Dayo Akinbobola:

- African Renaissance
- Journal of African Affairs
- Journal of African Union Studies (JOAUS)
- Journal of Reviews on Global Economics
- AYIKA: Journal of Environment and Politics in Africa

Conference Venue: Online (Video Conference) Note: This Conference reduces costs involved in conference attendance. Delegates do not need to spend on travel or accommodation.

Conveners:

Dr Kayode Eesuola Institute of African and Diaspora Studies, University of Lagos, Nigeria.

Dr Kelechi Johnmary Ani Department of History and Strategic Studies, Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Ebonyi State, Nigeria

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