

## **Legal Committee**

### *The question of bypassing vaccine trials during pandemics*

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# RESEARCH REPORT



**Forum:** Legal Committee (GA6)

**Issue:** The question of bypassing vaccine trials during pandemics

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## Introduction

Developing a new vaccine from scratch takes a considerable time. Although it is dependent on many elements varying according to the amount of information extent on the disease, how the disease infects people and spreads, and so on, traditionally it takes approximately between 5-10 years in total. Thus, making it worth notability that there already exists authorized vaccines for COVID-19, and are evaluating stage 3 trial data. This alone speaks to the amplitude of the efforts regarding the vast need for a permanent solution to the virus, essentially keeping in mind the social and economic outburst it has caused throughout 2020.

The human body has a complex structure that can easily react to an external medication in the long run or in short term. Thus, a vaccine should not only heal a body, but also not affect it in a negative way. This means the vaccine should have solid proof and a rate of confidence that it has been tested on massive varieties of people, and has not affected them badly in the short or long term, leading to other diseases or illnesses. Overall, the main question to ask is not how effective the vaccine is, but rather how reliable it is to not risk an entire generation's health. There has been political and scientific polarization as well, regarding the major leading states which are competing to find the most effective vaccine earlier than the others.

## Definition of Key Terms

**Rate of Confidence:** The rate of confidence is a reference to statistics, and derived after testing a specific amount of people. In a test group of 1000 people, the accuracy of the derived information is around 90 percent true.

**Pandemic:** A pandemic is defined as an “epidemic occurring worldwide and crossing international boundaries, usually affecting a large number of people” by the WHO (World Health Organisation).

## General Overview

During an urgent situation like the above mentioned, governments have to take immediate action to support R&D (Research and Development) centers in order to solve the issue as quickly and efficiently as possible aside from also enacting governmental responsibilities such as obligatory quarantine and mandatory mask use within the country. The solution as a whole, however, always leads back to relying on scientific sources during pandemics.

There is highly in-depth research with political and scientific competition on the line. After scientists have embarked upon a race to produce safe and effective vaccines in a record time, there are currently testing 64 vaccines in clinical trials on humans and 20 have reached the final stages of testing. A minimum of 85 preclinical vaccines is under active investigation on animals. Currently, the leading vaccines on the matter today are mainly manufactured by the United States of America (Pfizer-BioNTech), followed by Russia's Gamaleya vaccine followed by Oxford's AstraZeneca, and lastly, the CanSino, majorly produced and used in China.

## Major Parties Involved and Their Views

### *United States Of America*

The United States is currently first in line with respect to leading vaccines. The downside of the Pfizer vaccine is the inefficient preserving conditions. The vaccine requires ultracold preserving which is difficult to acquire when the mass population is in need. The Pfizer vaccine also proves to be 95 percent effective, whereas the long term effects remain unproven.

### *Russian Federation*

After the release of the Sputnik vaccine developed by Russia, it provoked political reaction due to the name giving out a relevant message in correlation to the world's first artificial satellite, which won the space race at the time. The name evoked a sense of competition, as it was making an allusion to the Soviet Union's first satellite Sputnik 1, which was proof that they won the race for space. Even though Russia declares that the vaccine they have created is safe and that it was applied on Putin and his daughter, there is no guarantee that there will be no future side effects of a vaccine developed in such a short time.

### *People's Republic of China*

As the beginning point of COVID-19, China was the first country to lessen the cases to a minimum in a very short period of time with their fast and strict precautions. China's vaccine focuses on killing viral particles to expose the body's immune system to the virus without risking a serious disease response, unlike the Pfizer and Sputnik, which both focus on mRNA based vaccines. Back in 2003, China was also accused of trying to suppress information about the SARS virus, which originated from China.

## Timeline of Events

<b>The Great Plague of London (1665-1666)</b>	<i>The disease, also known as the Bubonic Plague, was a devastating appearance as it wiped out 20 percent of London's population in a very short time. The disease ended in a short time after the London Great Fire since it wiped out the main source of the virus: mice.</i>
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<b>The First Cholera Pandemic (1817)</b>	<i>Originated in Russia, this small intestine infection caused the death of one million people. The vaccination was found sooner or later, but the disease continued to spread.</i>
<b>1889 Russian Flu</b>	<i>This pandemic started in Siberia and Kazakhstan, traveled to Moscow, and made its way into Finland to Poland, reaching Europe. Within a year, after spreading to North America and Africa, 360,000 people had died.</i>
<b>Spanish Flu (1918)</b>	<i>The avian-borne flu resulted in 50 million deaths around the world. Originating in Europe, it swiftly spread worldwide. There were no cures or vaccinations against it at the time, and the deaths were so quick that the body storage crisis hit crisis level scarcity. By the time the flu disappeared in 1919, the infected individuals had either developed immunity or died.</i>
<b>1957 Asian Flu</b>	<i>Starting in China and making its way into the United States, the Asian Flu rapidly spread throughout England as well, where within six months 14,000 people lost their lives. Followed by a second global wave, it caused a total of 1.1 million deaths worldwide. A vaccine was developed, succeeding the contain the pandemic.</i>
<b>SARS (2003)</b>	<i>Believed to have possibly started with bats, spread to cats and then humans in China, leading to over 700 deaths. SARS was seen as a wake-up call to improve outbreak responses, and taken as a reference when dealing with Ebola and Zika viruses in the close future.</i>
<b>COVID-19 (2019)</b>	<i>COVID-19 is caused by a novel coronavirus- a new type of its past which was never found in humans. Much like SARS, it is spread through water droplets and bodily fluids. By December of 2020, the death tolls reached 1.6 million.</i>

## Treaties and Events

### *Compilation of Statements by United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies*

This compilation was released on the official website of OHCHR (Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) as a document. It mostly mentions how the treaty bodies have “Urged global leaders to ensure that human rights are respected in government measures to tackle the public health threat posed by the COVID-19 outbreak”

## *Toolkit of Treaty Law Perspectives and Judisprudence in the Context of COVID19*

This toolkit approaches treaty law perspectives and translates them into an operational contribution to strengthen a human rights-based approach to the States' response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue**

Unfortunately, due to the current situation and the urgent need for the vaccine, scientists do not have sufficient proof of the long term side effects as the issue has only been topical for a year now. There is no evidence prominent to demonstrate how the human body will react to the chemical impact of the vaccination. Moreover, there is a massive variety of people with several different conditions such as but not limited to the commonly known health problems such as diabetes or cancer. In usual circumstances, there is a testing group for common diseases of different ages. The testing groups are followed up on big numbers of people to have diversity and precise scientific proof.

### **Possible Solutions**

With the complete reliance on scientific methods and sources, governments must work in cooperation to develop cures. This will benefit all countries at the same time, as the socio-economic structure is continually harmed by the ongoing virus. The international competition must definitely be lessened when it comes to developing a vaccine, since the topic is so crucial for an entire generation's health. Governments must make economic budgeting for R&D (Research and Development) activities and empower scientific research.

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