

DEBATE

Michel Kazatchkine, former Executive Director of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, Senior Fellow at the Global Health Centre of the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies, Geneva

I am afraid that we are very close to the end, but we still have time for one or two questions from the audience.

Volker Perthes, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sudan and Head of the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan

Just to add a bit of evidence, in Sudan we can show that Covax works. We got 800,000 doses of vaccines through the Covax initiatives, plus probably 200,000 doses from member countries. It shows it works but it also shows how insufficient that is. 800,000 plus 200,000 doses for a country of 43 million means that at best we could vaccinate 1.5% of the population. If we are coming into a situation where less than 2% of the people are vaccinated in Africa and other developing regions and 60%, 70% or 80% of people are vaccinated in the industrialized world, we have another issue of decoupling. It is different from the one we discussed this morning when we spoke about the West and China, but it is another division of the world that is not healthy for anybody.

I would like to bring the discussion back to global governance and those that share, and Mr. Kramarz and our Japanese speaker went into some of the necessities here. I have heard comparisons this morning with the situation with the fight against global terrorism and preparation for war and these analogies are all useful for our thinking. However, since we have a lot of economists in the room, I would also like to draw a comparison with how we dealt with the financial crisis of 2008-2009, which I think we did much more efficiently. We all know that global governance works best when heavy national interests and the world are involved, and this was definitely the case in the financial crisis. It seems to me, and I am happy to be corrected, or in this case unhappy, that with regard to financial risks, global cooperation, multilateral cooperation through things like the Financial Action Taskforce, is still functioning despite the rivalry we are now seeing between the United States and China. My question to those of you on the panel and people in the audience who would like to comment, is can we take a clue from how we dealt with the financial crisis in 2008-2009 in setting up international coordination mechanisms, which actually have been working and functioning since and that have been maintained to today despite political rivalries?

Michel Kazatchkine

Thank you very much for your question and also your comment on Covax, that there are areas where people actually see the benefit but also that the number of vaccines that came in was far below what was needed and second, of course, we cannot sustainably, as Juliette Tuakli already said, rely on a system where the drugs, the vaccines are made in the North, sold to rich countries and then somehow redistributed. This is untenable as a system, and we have to change it.

With regard to your second question, I wonder if I could call on Jean-Claude Trichet, because it is the analogy between the current situation and the way the 2008-2011 crisis was managed. One of the points that your commission, the High-Level Financing group in the G20 was making, is that the Stabilization Fund created to deal with that crisis would be a good model for dealing with financing of preparedness and response.

Jean-Claude Trichet, European Chairman of the Trilateral Commission, former President of the ECB

Thank you very much for this question. I have to say that I was very impressed by the multidimensional vision we have after hearing all the members of the panel and your own remarks, Professor. Indeed, it seems to me that when we discussed that, we had this analogy with the terrible subprime crisis, Lehman Brothers, and all the consequences it had on global financial and economic stability. We proposed this new concept that we thought was a good idea and I understand that it has some kind of emerging consensus. We also thought it would be good to have governance in a way that has still to be optimized, backed by the international community by asking the G20 to play some kind of important role. I know how delicate this is, but our own experience was that a good solution would be having a highly professional entity with the means and ability to propose a number of actions backed by the international community in appropriate ways. We thought that the international community as a whole plus the G20 would have the capacity to provide the political might necessary at a global level and that it would be a good solution. Of course, all this has to crystallize into decisions, and we discussed that together by the way, Professor, so I really hope that we will have a new way of coping with the next challenges. It was said very clearly by all the speakers that we also have to prepare for the next pandemic, which will come and that will probably be unavoidable.

Michel Kazatchkine

Thank you very much and I would like to close the session with this, thanking all the panelists and the audience for being so active.