

**Video message
Asean Institute of Strategic and International Studies
17 August 2021**

Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear colleagues and friends,

I'm often asked when the Covid-19 pandemic will end.

My answer is simple: it will end when the world chooses to end it. It's in our hands.

We have effective tools to prevent, diagnose and treat this disease. But the world has not used those tools well.

Increased social mixing, inconsistent use of public health and social measures, and inequitable access to vaccines are driving transmission and creating a two-track pandemic, divided between the haves and the have-nots.

I know that several Asean countries are now facing sharp increases in cases and deaths, and WHO is committed to supporting you in any way we can.

Together with our partners, we are working to increase the production and equitable distribution of vaccines.

Even as we work to control this pandemic, we must learn the lessons it is teaching us, and prepare for the future.

I welcome the commitment of Asean governments to build a regional response to Covid-19 and future health emergencies.

There is now growing global support for the idea of a treaty or other international instrument to provide a global framework for pandemic preparedness and response.

We seek the support of Asean countries for this important initiative, including through Indonesia's G20 presidency next year.

Thank you for your commitment to building a healthier, safer future for your region and the whole world.

I thank you.