**Samira Rafaela (Renew).** – Madam President, I am in politics to protect people’s lives and health, and if that means I need to support less favourable options for one of the richest industries in the world, I will do so. Not one life in this world is less important than patents on vaccines. I expect the EU to contribute to the fight against the pandemic by putting all options on the table.

The EU has produced vaccines and kept exporting to third countries via COVAX in the last months. Only this week, the US announced that it will finally contribute to the global distribution effort. However, the global distribution effort is at risk of being far too slow to reach the goal of 70% of the world’s population vaccinated, and it is a shame that export restrictions are placed on vaccines and raw materials.

This is not the way forward in a global pandemic. This is vaccine privilege. The EU needs to remain cautious and not follow this path. Developing countries are depending on a limited supply. Actively scaling up global production should be our top priority to get out of the global pandemic, and the EU must support a temporary waiver of certain aspects of the TRIPS agreement.

I call on the Council and the Commission to keep a comprehensive approach towards expanding global production. We are not safe until everyone is safe.