

PRESS RELEASE

Government Use Licenses on Remdesivir and Favipiravir in Indonesia Another TRIPS Flexibility Used

Access to affordable medicine activists appreciate and warmly welcome the Presidential Decree on the Government Use Licenses of COVID-19 drugs.

The issuance of Presidential Decree number 100 of 2021 regarding the Government Use License for Remdesivir and Presidential Decree number 101 of 2021 regarding the Government Use License for Favipiravir were warmly welcomed by one of access to affordable medicine activist from Indonesia AIDS Coalition. This Presidential Decree was signed by President Joko Widodo on November 10, 2021 and enables Indonesia to use patents for these two important drugs for the treatment of COVID-19 in order to overcome the problem of the COVID-19 pandemic which is still a scourge of public health in Indonesia.

Aditya Wardhana, spokesman for the Access to Affordable Medicines Coalition who is also the Executive Director of the Indonesia AIDS Coalition said, "The Indonesian government has proven its commitment to being at the forefront of efforts to combat COVID-19 by issuing a Presidential Decree on the Government Use Licenses for this COVID-19 drugs." He also added that this action was a continuation of the previous government's strategic step by becoming one of the co-sponsors of the TRIPS Waiver in free trade negotiations at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

COVID-19 itself is still a threat to public health. Remdesivir and Favipiravir are known to be one of the world's mainstay options to reduce morbidity and mortality from COVID-19. Unfortunately, due to the existence of a monopoly, access to these lifesaving medicines is very limited considering that the production of these drugs is monopolized by the drug patent holders. The issuance of these two Presidential Decree will provide a legal basis for the Indonesian government to produce generic versions of COVID-19 drugs.

The Minister of Health, Budi Gunadi Sadikin himself on several discussions with Indonesia AIDS Coalition, very firmly saying that the Indonesian government is very committed to being a production hub for diagnostic tools, vaccines, and treatment for COVID-19. This is to avoid Indonesia's dependence on getting access to diagnostic tools, vaccines and medicines for COVID-19 as well as being a source of production for countries in the region that need it. Indonesia itself is known to have a very adequate production capacity to produce medicines and vaccines for COVID-19 if this is legally possible, especially in relation to the existence of patents that protect the production of medicines and vaccines for COVID-19.

Aditya also added that because the mutation of the virus that causes COVID-19 will continue to develop, he hopes that this decisive and bold step from the Indonesian government can also be continued to accommodate other needed COVID-19 drugs such as Molnupiravir and also issue a

Presidential Decree on Government Use License for vaccines for COVID-19, especially vaccines with the mRNA type so that in the future Indonesia does not need to depend on other countries and can also become a production hub for surrounding countries.

The issuance of this Presidential Decree is a legal step according to the WTO agreement because it has been regulated in the TRIPS Declaration. In its history, this is the fourth government patent implementation regulation issued by the Indonesian government since the first it was issued in 2004, 2007 and 2012 for HIV and AIDS and Hepatitis drugs.

Indonesia AIDS Coalition warmly welcomes the issuance of this Presidential Decree and is with the government to ensure that the implementation of this Presidential Decree can be carried out as quickly as possible and that Indonesia can immediately produce COVID-19 medicines that are needed by many people both in Indonesia and in the region.

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