

## WTTC wants travel to be safe, US holds key for vaccine

A Monitor Report

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Cancun : At the just concluded WTTC Summit in Cancun, Mexico. There was not any public discussion on the catastrophic situation in India, but CEO Gloria Guevara took the initiative and interviewed Manuel Santos, a signer with 170 others to push US President Biden to open patent restrictions, allowing the vaccine to reach developing nations.

When WTTC CEO Gloria Guevara interviewed former Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos at the just-concluded Tourism Summit in Cancun, they kept a secret they did not want to share with the world. "We are not safe until everyone is safe."

The catastrophic spread of the virus and deadly consequences in India made US President Biden's conclusion "We are not safe until everyone is safe" enormously relevant to the tourism world and to the pharmaceutical industry. There was very little talk about India in Cancun, but the fact is this virus travels fast and all the progress made so far in the world may become shaky.

Will President Biden stand up to his words? What will WTTC and 170 former heads of state and Nobel Peace Prize winners do to make their open letter heard? There was no immediate answer by the White House.

"We are not safe until everyone is safe" was the conclusion in a one-on-one interview with former Colombian President and 2016 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Juan Manuel

Santos and the World Travel and Tourism Council CEO Gloria Guevara at the WTTC Summit in Cancun on April 26.

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the former Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos treated their support for US President Biden's words as a secret and made sure this entire session was cut off from livestreaming. Media, was prevented from accessing the recording of this most important session at the Summit.

Former Heads of State and Nobel Peace Prize receivers called on President Biden to waive intellectual property rules for COVID vaccines as the key to opening the opportunity for developing nations to produce or receive urgently-needed vaccines. US President Biden was correct when he hinted about understanding this interconnected world. Travel and Tourism makes this world interconnected, and the world is simply not safe until every citizen of every country is safe.

WTTC represents the private sector in the Travel and Tourism world. Santos is a major player in the public sector. Perhaps this letter to the US President is not a message a private industry organisation wants to get involved in.

Santos sharing this important message, as one who signed the letter to US President Biden on April 14 with Gloria Guevara and delegates at the WTTC Summit in Cancun, is significant and important.

The World Tourism Network (WTN) applauded the letter a day after it was signed. "This letter is an important way for the international Travel and Tourism industry to take a stand and to take a step forward in making the world a safer place during this crisis. A global pandemic must not make the interests of the private pharma industry the sole benefactor."