

Deadly failure

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By Guillermo Alvarado

According to statistics published by John Hopkins University in the United States, the number of five million people dead as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has been exceeded worldwide, a shocking figure that, nevertheless, some consider conservative.

After learning of the figure, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres described it as "a failure" for the whole world, as well as a sign that we cannot give up in the face of this disease.

In many places there are still overcrowded hospitals and exhausted health workers, Guterres said, adding that there is still the threat of new variants of the virus that could push up infection figures, which have

now exceeded 246 million since the beginning of the crisis.

The statistics of deaths are headed by the United States, with 745,800 deaths, followed by Brazil, with 607,800 deaths, and in third place is India, where 458,000 people lost their lives.

In spite of the high figures, there is consensus that they are far below reality due to the fact that in many places the records are unreliable.

Another problem yet to be solved is the unequal distribution and application of vaccines against the new coronavirus, which were monopolized by the richer nations to the detriment of the less developed, but highly populated ones.

A recent analysis by the British newspaper Financial Times indicates that a small group of countries with high economic capacity received on average 16 times more doses per inhabitant than those that need assistance to access the immunizers.

Mechanisms such as COVAX, designed by the World Health Organization to guarantee vaccines to those most in need, have not worked in practice because transnational laboratories preferred to do business with the major powers.

Thus, while the United States is already applying the third dose and has six vaccines per person in stock, there are regions in Africa where barely three percent of their inhabitants have received the first injection.

Monica Ghandi, a specialist in infectious diseases, told the Democracy Now portal that the pressure from some powers to apply booster doses, in reality "diverts attention from the non-fulfillment of a moral and ethical obligation to the world."

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