

# **Crisis Nationalism: To What Extent is National Partiality Justifiable During a Global Pandemic?**

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**Abstract:** Are countries especially entitled, if not obliged, to prioritize the interests or well-being of their own citizens during a global crisis, such as a global pandemic? We call this partiality for compatriots in times of crisis “crisis nationalism”. Vaccine nationalism is one vivid example of crisis nationalism during the COVID-19 pandemic; so is the case of the US government’s purchasing a 3-month supply of the global stock of the antiviral Remdesivir for domestic use. Is crisis nationalism justifiable at all, and, if it is, what are its limits? We examine some plausible arguments for national partiality, and conclude that these arguments support crisis nationalism only within strict limits. The different arguments for partiality, as we will note, arrive at these limits for different reasons. But more generally, so we argue, any defensible crisis nationalism must not entail the violation of human rights or the worsening of people’s deprivation. Moreover, we propose that good faith crisis nationalism ought to be sensitive to the potential moral costs of national partiality during a global crisis and must take extra care to control or offset these costs. Thus, crisis nationalism in the form of vaccine nationalism or the hoarding of global supplies of therapeutics during a global pandemic exceeds the bounds of acceptable partiality.