

**ACT Accelerator Facilitation Council Briefing for members and WHO Member States Virtual meeting, 6 July 2021, 12:30 – 15.00**

Honorable Ministers,  
Facilitation Council Members,  
Colleagues

I am delivering these opening remarks on behalf of Commissioner Kyriakides, who is attending the plenary of the European Parliament and therefore is unable to be with us today.

- The coronavirus has been a test for international solidarity and our capacity to act in a multilateral way. After a shaky start, things are improving. But we have much more to do.
- A rapid rollout of vaccinations is needed to at least partly prevent the spread of infectious variants, new lockdown measures and additional economic dislocation.
- The EU remains committed to global solidarity and multilateralism. We are the region that export the most vaccines worldwide. Total EU exports since December 2021 have now reached 400 million to more than 130 countries. EU-produced vaccines currently represent over 40% all supplies shipped via COVAX.
- Team Europe is one of the lead contributors to COVAX with over € 3 billion. We trust that we will be able to donate 100 million doses of vaccines to low and middle income countries, until the end of the year and COVAX as key instrument of ACT-A will be the main channel for dose sharing.
- To recall that the number of doses administered in Africa is still much lower than in the rest of the world. There are still some African countries which have not yet received any vaccine.
- In February, we announced EUR 100 million in humanitarian assistance to support the roll-out of vaccination campaigns in Africa.
- In addition to vaccines, it is highly important to strengthen our commitment to diagnostics and therapeutics. Testing in High Income Countries is 100 times the testing rate seen in some Low Income countries. An increasing number of countries

is at risk of running out of oxygen and we observe a surge in demand five times greater than before the pandemic. These gaps need to be bridged through our joint efforts.

- We are committed to supporting global research efforts on diagnostics and therapeutics. Since the onset of the pandemic, we have invested over EUR 170 million through research projects, ranging from the development of rapid diagnostic tests, treatments and vaccines to clinical trials and implementation research.
- In addition, EUR 150 million were invested in February for research to detect and counter further COVID-19 variants. On 23 June 2021 the Commission has launched the Coronavirus Global R&I Collaboration Portal to offer matchmaking opportunities for researchers and research projects worldwide focusing on the socio-economic aspects of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Team Europe is also committed to increase the global availability of vaccines by supporting manufacturing and access to vaccines, medicines and health technologies in Africa.
- The initiative will be backed by EUR 1 billion from the EU budget and European development finance institutions. A number of EU Member States have indicated their interest to join this initiative.
- Team Europe support has started already in several countries: Senegal, South Africa and Rwanda are already receiving EU support to enhance their manufacturing capacities and regulatory frameworks. Together with these three front-runners, several other countries are seeking support from the EU.
- To succeed, partnerships are key. The Commission has engaged with the Africa CDC in the context of the Africa-led Partnerships for African Vaccine Manufacturing and with AUDA-NEPAD in the context of supporting the future African Medicines Agency.
- In the light of this engagement we are thus keen to collaborate with partners on these issues, including in the context of the COVAX Manufacturing Task Force.

Thank you