

## FIRST BATCH OF COVID-19 VACCINES ARRIVE IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM VIA COVAX FACILITY

**02 April 2021** – Today, Brunei Darussalam has received the first of a series of COVID-19 vaccine doses shipped via the COVAX Facility, or COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Plan, a partnership between the World Health Organization (WHO), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). This is a historic step in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and in ensuring the safety of the people in Brunei Darussalam. This delivery is part of a wave of arrivals that will continue over the coming months.

"Vaccination is the most effective measure to protect oneself, loved ones, and even the community from the harmful effects of COVID-19. In the medium and long term, the more people are vaccinated, the higher the level of immunity of the population against the disease." said Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Dr Haji Mohammad Isham Bin Haji Jaafar, Minister of Health, Brunei Darussalam during the Press Conference on the Launch of the National Vaccination Program For COVID-19 yesterday, 1st April 2021.

On 31st March 2021, COVAX shipped 24,000 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine, from Amsterdam via Singapore to Brunei Darussalam, arriving on the morning of 02 April 2021. These 24,000 doses are the first of a total of 100,800 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine expected to be provided in batches by the COVAX Facility by the end of June. Receiving the vaccines at the Brunei International Airport was Haji Maswadi bin Haji Mohsin, Acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and Dr Haji Zulaidi bin Haji Abd Latif, Deputy Permanent Secretary (Professional), Ministry of Health.

The COVAX Facility is an unprecedented global effort to provide every country in the world with equitable access to safe COVID-19 vaccines as rapidly as possible. COVAX is part of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, a ground-breaking global collaboration to accelerate development, production, and equal access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines.

"WHO is in solidarity with the people of Brunei Darussalam and partners in welcoming the arrival of the COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility," said Dr Lo Ying-Ru Jacqueline, Head of Mission and WHO Representative to Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore. "Vaccines save lives and the arrival of these vaccines will help protect the priority groups identified by Brunei Darussalam – first and foremost health workers and other front-liners. Getting vaccinated, in combination with other proven public health measures, is a very important step for people to be protected against COVID-19."

“We welcome the arrival of the first batch of COVID-19 vaccines in Brunei as part of the COVAX Facility. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with the Ministry of Health and other partners to reach the people of Brunei with life-saving vaccines. We look forward to the next shipments, and a successful immunization campaign. The arrival of vaccines in Brunei gives us hope that there is an end to the pandemic”, said Dr Rashed Mustafa Sarwar, UNICEF Representative to Malaysia and Special Representative to Brunei Darussalam.

Similar considerations for the use of “pooled” resources have been made before, particularly for procurement of medications by Brunei Darussalam and other countries in the region, and the COVAX Facility is an excellent example of the implementation of this concept.

As an addition to procurement through the COVAX facility, the Ministry of Health will be procuring vaccines through bilateral arrangements as well. The COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Committee will ensure that all the vaccines that will be administered to the public have met the necessary regulatory safety standards to protect the population.

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme will commence on Saturday, 3rd April 2021, and will be implemented in **three (3) phases** according to different population groups:

1. **Phase one:** Includes frontliners, senior citizens aged 60 and above, as well as students or individuals who will be studying abroad.
2. **Phase two:** Includes staff working at Daycare Centres, teachers and adults with high-risks / comorbidities.
3. **Phase three:** Other individuals who are 18 years and above.

COVID-19 vaccination centres will be set up in all the four districts as follows:

<b>Brunei Muara District:</b>	Indoor Stadium, Hassanal Bolkiah National Sports Complex
<b>Tutong District:</b>	Pengiran Muda Mahkota Pengiran Muda Haji Al-Muhtadee Billah Hospital, Tutong
<b>Belait District:</b>	Suri Seri Begawan Hospital
<b>Temburong District:</b>	Pengiran Isteri Hajjah Mariam Hospital

For the first phase, frontliners, specifically medical staff in Government and private health facilities across the country, will receive the vaccines first, to be followed by other frontliners who have been identified as a priority group to receive the vaccines.

Based on current evidence, the COVID-19 vaccine can protect individuals from severe disease and reduce hospitalizations and deaths. Nevertheless, it is still important for the public to remain vigilant and continue to take the usual precautions by adopting and practicing preventive measures as recommended. This includes avoiding crowded places where possible, practicing physical distancing where necessary, wearing a face mask, staying home when you have flu-like symptoms, as well as frequently washing your hands, maintaining personal hygiene and practicing proper cough and sneeze etiquette.

- END -

## Notes to Editors

### About COVAX

COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, is co-convened by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (Gavi) and the World Health Organization (WHO) – working in partnership with UNICEF as key implementing partner, developed and developing country vaccine manufacturers, the World Bank, and others. It is the only global initiative that is working with governments and manufacturers to ensure COVID-19 vaccines are available worldwide to both higher-income and lower-income countries.

### CEPI's role in COVAX

CEPI is leading on the [COVAX vaccine research and development portfolio](#), investing in R&D across a variety of promising candidates, with the goal to support development of three safe and effective vaccines which can be made available to countries participating in the COVAX Facility. As part of this work, CEPI has secured first right of refusal to potentially over one billion doses for the COVAX Facility to a number of candidates, and made strategic investments in vaccine manufacturing, which includes reserving capacity to manufacture doses of COVAX vaccines at a network of facilities, and securing glass vials to hold 2 billion doses of vaccine. CEPI is also investing in the 'next generation' of vaccine candidates, which will give the world additional options to control COVID-19 in the future.

## Gavi's role in COVAX

[Gavi](#) is leading on procurement and delivery at scale for COVAX: coordinating the design, implementation and administration of the [COVAX Facility](#) and the [COVAX AMC](#) and working with its Alliance partners UNICEF and WHO, along with governments, on country readiness and delivery. As part of this role, Gavi hosts the Office of the COVAX Facility to coordinate the operation and governance of the mechanism as a whole, manages relationships with Facility participants, and negotiates advance purchase agreements with manufacturers of promising vaccine candidates on behalf of the 190 economies participating in the COVAX Facility. It also coordinates design, operation and fundraising for the COVAX AMC that supports 92 lower-income economies, including a no-fault compensation mechanism that will be administered by WHO. As part of this work, Gavi supports governments and partners on ensuring country readiness, providing funding and oversight of UNICEF procurement of vaccines as well as partners' and governments work on readiness and delivery. This includes support for cold chain equipment, technical assistance, syringes, vehicles, and other aspects of the vastly complex logistical operation for delivery.

## WHO's role in COVAX

WHO has multiple roles within [COVAX](#): It provides normative guidance on vaccine policy, regulation, safety, R&D, allocation, and country readiness and delivery. Its Strategic Advisory Group of Experts ([SAGE](#)) on Immunization develops evidence-based immunization policy recommendations. Its Emergency Use Listing (EUL) / prequalification programmes ensure harmonized review and authorization across member states. It provides global coordination and member state support on vaccine safety monitoring. It developed the target product profiles for COVID-19 vaccines and provides R&D technical coordination. WHO leads, together with UNICEF, the [Country Readiness and Delivery workstream](#), which provides support to countries as they prepare to receive and administer vaccines. Along with Gavi and numerous other partners working at the global, regional, and country-level, the CRD workstream provides tools, guidance, monitoring, and on the ground technical assistance for the planning and roll-out of the [vaccines](#). Along with COVAX partners, WHO has [developed](#) a [no-fault compensation scheme](#) as part of the time-limited indemnification and liability commitments.

## UNICEF's role in COVAX

UNICEF is leveraging its experience as the largest single vaccine buyer in the world and working with manufacturers and partners on the procurement of COVID-19 vaccine doses, as well as freight, logistics and storage. UNICEF already procures more than 2 billion doses of vaccines annually for routine immunisation and outbreak response on behalf of nearly 100 countries. In collaboration with the PAHO Revolving Fund, UNICEF is leading efforts to procure and supply doses of COVID-19 vaccines for COVAX. In addition, UNICEF, Gavi and WHO are working with governments around the clock to ensure that countries are ready to receive the vaccines, with

appropriate cold chain equipment in place and health workers trained to dispense them. UNICEF is also playing a lead role in efforts to foster trust in vaccines, delivering vaccine confidence communications and tracking and addressing misinformation around the world.

### **About ACT-Accelerator**

The Access to COVID-19 Tools ACT-Accelerator, is a new, ground-breaking global collaboration to accelerate the development, production, and equitable access to COVID-19 tests, treatments, and vaccines. It was set up in response to a call from G20 leaders in March 2020 and launched by the WHO, European Commission, France and The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in April 2020.

The ACT-Accelerator is not a decision-making body or a new organisation, but works to speed up collaborative efforts among existing organisations to end the pandemic. It is a framework for collaboration that has been designed to bring key players around the table with the goal of ending the pandemic as quickly as possible through the accelerated development, equitable allocation, and scaled up delivery of tests, treatments and vaccines, thereby protecting health systems and restoring societies and economies in the near term. It draws on the experience of leading global health organisations which are tackling the world's toughest health challenges, and who, by working together, are able to unlock new and more ambitious results against COVID-19. Its members share a commitment to ensure all people have access to all the tools needed to defeat COVID-19 and to work with unprecedented levels of partnership to achieve it. The ACT-Accelerator has four areas of work: diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccines and the health system connector. Cross-cutting all of these is the workstream on Access & Allocation.

### **Media contacts**

#### CEPI Press office

Telephone: +44 7387 055214

Email: [press@cepi.net](mailto:press@cepi.net)

#### GAVI

Meghana Sharafudeen: +41 79 711 55 54 [msharafudeen@gavi.org](mailto:msharafudeen@gavi.org)

Evan O'Connell +33 6 17 57 21 26 [econnell@gavi.org](mailto:econnell@gavi.org)

#### UNICEF

Rachel Choong, Media Officer, +6012 4162 872 [rchoong@unicef.org](mailto:rchoong@unicef.org),

WHO Representative Office for Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam and Singapore



CEPI



Djordje Novakovic, Strategic and Risk Communication Consultant, +381695547069,  
novakovicd@who.int

WHO global

+41 22 791 2222 [mediainquiries@who.int](mailto:mediainquiries@who.int)

Reference : KK/PR/1

Date : 19 Sya'ban 1442 / 02 April 2021