Minutes: Steering Board meeting, 30 October 2020

1. COVAX

In a separate meeting, dedicated to COVAX, the European Commission provided a general state of play of the COVAX Facility, stating that the initiative is a success in terms of participation with 184 participants so far, including the 27 EU MS, Norway and Iceland as part of Team Europe. More than a $1bn have been committed to the self-financing side and $1.8bn in pledges and donations to the AMC part.

The Commission informed that a first meeting of the **Shareholders Council** would take place the following week, where participants from all Member States were invited and went through the agenda that includes:

- an update on COVAX Facility
- a discussion on COVAX Facility Governance (eg. terms of reference, operating procedures, executive committee, process of appointment of the two co-chairs)
- an update on the COVAX Facility Vaccine Portfolio- this session would be held in a restricted format.

FI asked the Commission to provide reporting from the Friends of COVAX meeting to those MSs that are not part of the group. Furthermore, FI enquired about the process of nomination in different groups.
The Commission explained that the process and criteria for nominations in different groups and committees was not yet decided and it was confident the EU would be fairly represented. Some groups require independent experts. The Commission invited MSs to nominate experts and will assist in coordinating if necessary.

The question on how COVAX would manage donations and **liability in case of donations** was discussed.

The Commission explained that there are two tracks, (i) one called "Humanitarian Buffer" to the benefit of population groups left aside, such as refugees, minorities, people in areas of conflict and (ii) the second an "exchange mechanism", similar at the EU "Bazaar" aiming at optimising supply and demand, dealing with surpluses and different vaccine technologies.

Liability should be arranged between the recipient country and the company, not the Member States willing to donate that should, therefore, not remain liable for the vaccine donated.
COVAX is reflecting on a kind of compensation fund made up from a fee charged to each dose to cover possible adverse effects in population of AMC.

Member States suggested that a template document (between donor, recipient and company), could be shared with them.

On **financing,** the Commission reminded of its contribution of €400 million and that amount would be provided through a loan (in cash) from the EIB and indicated that a top up in direct grant was considered.

The Commission welcomed the bilateral contribution made by some MSs and encouraged all 27 MSs to provide funding bilaterally. EIB stands ready to help MSs with the advancement of any future commitments.

AMC will need USD 2 Bln by the end of the year and an estimated USD 5 Bln for next year.

Update on Johnson & Johnson contract and the Bazaar

The Members were informed that:

- the Bazaar process for Johnson & Johnson was opened, with a revised table distributed. The deadline for the MSs to reply by Friday 6th November;
- the Bazaar process would be opened in advance for the Pfizer/BioNTech contract, immediately after the meeting.

Update on other contracts in the tendering phase/ discussions with other companies

BioNTech- work on the contract was ongoing, with technical meetings advancing well. Elements of logistics outlined during the technical meeting still need to be reflected in the contract. The Members agreed that the Bazaar process should be started in advance.

Curevac –A third scientific presentation/discussion would be organised on the 3 November. Clarity is awaited from the company on the dosage.

Moderna –work on the contact is ongoing. Some elements of agreement during negotiations still need to be included in the contract.

Novavax- discussions with the company continue. The Members were informed on discussions on liability and indemnification.

Valneva - there are outstanding issues to resolve on indemnification and liability, but discussions have essentially concluded on the structure of the contract, on price, delivery and payment schedules and options.

Reithera – discussions with the company having concluded, they are asking whether we have made a decision to proceed with an APA with them.

The Members were reminded to follow up on their commitment to top up ESI, as the funds would enable the signature of APAs with vaccine providers/manufacturers.

The Members discussed various aspects on the logistic, which can be relevant in a strategic discussion on the mRNA vaccines.

The Members were informed that at the next meeting AstraZeneca would provide an update on Clinical trials, manufacturing and approval.

The Commission provided a short update on the state of play regarding the **Joint procurement for the supply of medical equipment for COVID-19 vaccination**, for which the evaluation of the tender evaluation was ongoing.

The Commission anticipates the evaluation to be finalized by mid-November (largely depending on the quality of offers and reactivity of companies), while the orders could be placed as of December ensuring that supplies are available in time for national deployment of COVID-19 vaccines.

The Commission also asked the MSs to inform if they launched or signed national procurement on syringes and needles in parallel, information that could be relevant for adjusting the offer to the needs of the Member States. *Note post meeting: The update should be send to:* 5.1.2e *@ec.europa.eu*

The Committee informed that the Joint Procurement Steering Committee would meet next week to discuss selection of the test and update on the joint procurement of syringes and needles.