



UNCLASSIFIED

Routine

DATE: 15 December 2020

REFERENCE: DOS-2020-05422

TO: Heads of Departments, Offices, Regional Commissions,  
A: Offices Away from Headquarters and Field Missions  
(see Distribution List)  
ASG DCO (with a request to kindly coordinate similar information from the RCs)

FROM: Atul Khare, Under Secretary-General  
DE: for Operational Support

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Atul Khare', with a long horizontal line underneath.

SUBJECT: **Update on the United Nations planning for sourcing and distribution of  
OBJET: COVID-19 vaccine and request for information**

1. As the global community welcomes the first COVID-19 vaccines, I am writing to update you on the Secretariat's actions regarding the planning for vaccination of United Nations staff and dependants and for sourcing and distribution of the vaccine(s).
2. Throughout the pandemic, our operations have been guided by several key objectives: supporting national authorities to help protect the vulnerable communities we serve; continuing to deliver on critical mandates; supporting countries to contain and mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus; addressing the associated socio-economic consequences of the pandemic; and protecting our personnel and their capacity to continue to support critical operations.
3. Earlier this year, to address the challenge of ensuring equitable access and fair allocation among all countries of an expected COVID-19 vaccine, a global access facility for vaccines (COVAX) was developed under the leadership of Gavi (The Vaccine Alliance), The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other global partners. The aim of COVAX is to provide fast global access to a safe and effective vaccine to all subscribing countries (as of today over 180 countries).
4. Supplies of the first vaccine(s) will be limited in the short to medium term, and WHO estimates that only around two billion doses will be available in 2021. As a result, WHO have developed guidance on the prioritization of specific risk groups for distribution of the vaccination.

**UNCLASSIFIED**

5. In accordance with the WHO Prioritization Framework, initial distribution of the vaccine(s) should be provided to all high priority groups within countries, particularly those who operate in high to very-high risk environments, such as healthcare workers and other frontline responders providing critical services; older adults defined by age-based risk specific to country/region; and individuals with higher risk medical conditions. In this regard and following the principle of ethical and equitable distribution, United Nations staff and their dependents will be, in the first instance, expected to receive the vaccine through the national vaccination programmes in the countries they are serving and in accordance with the WHO Prioritization Framework.

6. In this regard, the Secretary-General, in his attached letter to all Permanent and Observer Missions to the United Nations, reminded Member States of their role in adhering to the established WHO guidance for the distribution of the vaccine and requested host countries to include United Nations personnel serving within their borders in their national vaccination planning.

7. With respect to our uniformed troops and police, while it is envisaged that those yet to be deployed be vaccinated in their home countries, those already deployed in peacekeeping mission areas will receive the vaccine in situ based on their risk priority.

8. It is also recognized that in some countries, it will not be possible for United Nations personnel (staff, their dependents and uniformed personnel) to obtain the vaccine through national programmes. In these instances, separate arrangements would be needed. To address that demand, the Department of Operational Support (DOS) is already engaging with COVAX in order to secure the necessary doses of vaccine(s) to meet this need. However, it is important to stress that we must first explore all possibilities of receiving the vaccine through the national vaccination programmes in order to avoid competing globally or within host countries for resources or duplicating vaccination programmes.

9. In order to ensure our readiness and to support the planning efforts of the Office of Supply Chain Management of this Department, you are kindly requested to complete the attached Priority Framework Matrix and return it to [OSCM-OASG@un.org](mailto:OSCM-OASG@un.org) by 23 December 2020. While many elements of the Priority Framework Matrix may be easier to collate and compile, care needs to be taken to preserve the confidentiality of medical information of individuals. For those with pre-existing conditions, only total numbers of such persons need be obtained from medical officers of your entities, where applicable, and conveyed without any individually identifiable details.

10. I would also like to highlight that the distribution of the vaccine(s) around the world will be a monumental task (particularly as some variants are unstable and

**UNCLASSIFIED**

require ultracold storage at -94 degrees) and requires commercial aircraft capacity of some estimated 8,000 cargo flights. Recognizing the challenges that some healthcare systems and internal transportation networks may face in delivery of the vaccine(s), DOS will also work with you and other partners to identify appropriate solutions to support in-country vaccination programmes where needed.

11. Finally, as we move into this next phase of the COVID-19 global response, I would like to assure you of my own, and my Department's commitment to providing you with the continued level of care and responsiveness necessary to fight the pandemic. Should you have questions or concerns please reach out to Mr. Christian Saunders, Assistant Secretary-General for Supply Chain Management (email: [saundersc@un.org](mailto:saundersc@un.org)) or to [OSCM-OASG@un.org](mailto:OSCM-OASG@un.org) as needed.

Annex: Priority Framework Matrix

**UNCLASSIFIED****Distribution List:**

Mr. Movses Abelian, Under-Secretary-General, DGACM  
Mr. Hesham Afifi, Acting Executive Secretary, ACABQ  
Maj. Gen. José Eladio Alcaín, Chief Military Observer, UNMOGIP  
Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary, ECE  
Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Executive Secretary, ESCAP  
Mr. Mahamat Saleh Annadif, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, MINUSMA  
Ms. Elia Armstrong, Director, Ethics Office  
Mr. Jean Arnault, Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, OPESG-Bolivia  
Ms. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, High Commissioner, OHCHR  
Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Director-General, UNON  
Ms. Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary, ECLAC  
Mr. Patrick Carey, Acting Assistant Secretary-General, OICT  
Ms. Giovanna Ceglie, Director, UNGSC  
Mr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNOWAS  
Ms. Michèle Coninx, Executive Director, CTED  
Ms. Jane Connors, Victim' Rights Advocate, VRA  
Ms. Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary, ESCWA  
Ms. Antonia De Meo, Director, UNICRI  
Maj. Gen. Stefano Del Col, Force Commander, UNIFIL  
Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, Director, UNOOSA  
Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General, DPPA  
Mr. Mame Ely Dieng, Officer-in-Charge Head of Office, OSASG-Burundi  
Mr. Larbi Djacta, Chairperson, ICSC  
Mr. Paulin Djomo, Chief, RSCE  
Ms. Shireen Dodson, United Nations Ombudsman, UNOMS  
Mr. Alan Doyle, Officer-in-Charge Head of Mission, UNTSO  
Ms. Cristina Duarte, Special Adviser on Africa, OSAA  
Mr. François Louncény Fall, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNOCA  
Ms. Lisa Filipetto, Head of Mission, UNSOS  
Ms. Melissa Fleming, Under-Secretary-General, DGC  
Ms. Alayne Frankson-Wallace, Executive Director, OAJ  
Ms. Virginia Gamba, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, OSRSG/CAAC  
Ms. Natalia Gherman, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNRCCA  
Mr. Vladimir Goryayev, Executive Director, UNROD  
Mr. Martin Griffiths, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, OSESG-Yemen  
Mr. Pedro Guazo, Representative of the Secretary-General, UNJSPF  
Lt. Gen. Abhijit Guha, Head of Mission and Chair of the Redeployment Coordination Committee, UNMHA  
Maj. Gen. Ishwar Hamal, Force Commander, UNDOF  
Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, OSESSS  
Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Special-Representative of the Secretary-General, UNAMI  
Mr. Fabrizio Hochschild-Drummond, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, OSASG75  
Mr. Rodelito Ponciano Juan, Officer-in-Charge Chief, KJSO

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Mr. Karim Asad Ahmad Khan, Special Adviser and Head of the Investigative Team, UNITAD  
Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General, UNCTAD  
Mr. Nicholas Koumjian, Head, IIMM  
Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Coordinator, UNSCOL  
Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, BINUH  
Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General, DPO  
Mr. Paul Ladd, Director, UNRISD  
Mr. Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General, OCHA  
Ms. Jane Holl Lute, Special Coordinator, OSC-SEA  
Ms. Deborah Lyons, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNAMA  
Mr. Jeremiah Nyamane Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative, UNAMID  
Mr. Mirko Manzoni, Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, OPESG-Mozambique  
Ms. Catherine Marchi-Uhel, Head, IIIM  
Ms. Joan W. McDonald, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNIS  
Mr. Gilles Michaud, Under-Secretary-General, DSS  
Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNDRR  
Ms. Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, OSRSG/VAC  
Mr. Nickolay Mladenov, Special Coordinator, UNSCO  
Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, High Representative, UNAOC  
Ms. Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary, UNCBD  
Mr. Daryl Mundis, Registrar, STL  
Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative, UNODA  
Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, OSAPG  
Mr. Mankeur Ndiaye, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, MINUSCA  
Ms. Fatoumata Ndiaye, Under-Secretary-General, OIOS  
Ms. Sanda Ojiambo, Executive Director, Global Compact Office  
Mr. Parfait Onanga-Anyanga, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, OSESG-Horn of Africa  
Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, OSRSG/SVC  
Mr. Geir O. Pedersen, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, OSESG-Syria  
Ms. Simona Petrova-Vassileva, Secretary of CEB and Director of the CEB Secretariat, CEB  
Mr. Uren Pillay, Executive Secretary, JIU  
Mr. Robert Piper, Assistant Secretary-General, DCO  
Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General, DMSPC  
Ms. Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, Chef de Cabinet, EOSG  
Mr. Knut Rosandhaug, Coordinator, UNAKRT  
Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNVMC  
Ms. Annika Savill, Executive Head, UNDEF  
Ms. Christine Schraner-Burgener, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, OSESG-Myanmar  
Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General, OLA  
Mr. David Shearer, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMISS  
Ms. Josette Mira Sheeran, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, OSESG-Haiti  
Mr. Robert Skinner, Executive Director, UNOP  
Ms. Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary, ECA  
Ms. Rosine Sori-Coulibaly, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNIOGBIS  
Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNFICYP

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Mr. Colin Stewart, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, MINURSO  
Ms. Ayşe Cihan Sultanoğlu, United Nations Representative, UNRGID  
Mr. James Swan, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNSOM  
Mr. Yukio Takasu, Special Advisor of the Secretary-General, HSU  
Mr. Abubacarr Marie Tambaou, Registrar, IRMCT  
Mr. Zahir Tanin, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNMIK  
Mr. Kefyalew Amde Tessema, Force Commander and Head of Mission, UNISFA  
Ms. Hanna Serwaa Tetteh, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNOAU  
Mr. Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary, UNCCD  
Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative, UN-OHRLLS  
Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General, UNOG  
Ms. Gerda Verburg, Coordinator, SUN Movement  
Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General, OCT  
Ms. Ghada Fathy Ismail Waly, Executive Director, UNODC  
Ms. Ghada Fathy Ismail Waly, Director-General, UNOV  
Ms. Stephanie Williams, Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNSMIL  
Mr. Huang Xia, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, OSESG-Great Lakes Region  
Ms. Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, MONUSCO  
Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General, DESA

**For information:**

Mr. Fatos Abrashi, Head of Administration, UNSCOL  
Mr. Clemens Adams, Director of Administration, UNOG  
Mr. Emmanuel K. Agawu, Director of Mission Support, MINUSCA  
Mr. Anton Antchev, Director of Mission Support, MINUSMA  
Ms. Sandi Arnold, Chief of Mission Support, UNMIK  
Mr. Raja Arumugham, Chief of Mission Support, OSESG-Syria  
Mr. Erich Ball, Chief of Mission Support, UNVMC  
Ms. Renu Surendra Bhatia, Chief of Service, Business Partner, DSS  
Mr. Andrew Brimelow, Chief of Mission Support, UNMHA  
Mr. Luis Enrique Calzada, Executive Officer, DGC  
Mr. Ebrima Ceesay, Director of Mission Support, MONUSCO  
Mr. Joel Cohen, Chief of Mission Support, UNFICYP  
Ms. Maria Costa, Director of Mission Support, UNMISS  
Ms. Melva Crouch, Director of Mission Support, UNIFIL  
Mr. Nader Darwich, Chief of Mission Support, UNSMIL  
Ms. Ann De La Roche, Executive Officer, EOSG  
Mr. Ahmad Dik, Chief of Administration, ESCWA  
Mr. Alan Doyle, Chief of Mission Support, UNTSO  
Mr. David Falces, Chief of Administration, IRMCT  
Mr. Houston Fergusson, Director of Mission Support, UNAMID  
Mr. Jorge Gonçalves, Chief of Mission Support, UNAMA  
Mr. Miguel Mourato Gordo, Executive Officer, DGACM

**UNCLASSIFIED**

Ms. Magali Gutierrez, Executive Officer, OLA  
Mr. Carlos Haddad, Chief of Administration, ECA  
Ms. Maimouna Cherif Haidara Sylla, Acting Chief of Mission Support, OSASG-Burundi  
Mr. Curtis Hosang, Executive Officer, UNODA  
Mr. Adnan Issa, Chief of Administration, UNCTAD  
Mr. Harish Joshi, Chief of Mission Support, UNAMI  
Mr. Amadu Kamara, Director of Mission Support, UNSOS  
Mr. Anvar Kholbaev, Administrative Officer, UNRCCA  
Mr. Christopher Kirkcaldy, Director of Administration, UNON  
Mr. Robert Kirkwood, Chief of Mission Support, UNISFA  
Mr. Andrey Kovalenko, Chief of Administration, CTED  
Ms. Victoria Le Crichia-Wenzel, Executive Officer, OIOS  
Mr. Bernard Lee, Chief of Mission Support, UNDOF  
Ms. Andrea Cristina Marquez, Chief of Administration, ECLAC  
Ms. Anne Matthews, Chief of Administration, ESCAP  
Ms. Rosemarie McClean, Chief Executive of Pension Administration, UNJSPF  
Ms. Veneranda Mukandoli-Jefferson, Chief of Mission Support, MINURSO  
Mr. Francis Mumbey-Wafula, Administrative Officer, UNOAU  
Mr. Nester Odaga-Jalomayo, Chief of Mission Support, UNMOGIP  
Ms. Uchenna Odenigbo, Chief of Mission Support, UNOWAS  
Ms. Regina Pawlik, Executive Secretary, ICSC  
Mr. David Penklis, Executive Officer, DPO  
Mr. David Penklis, Executive Officer, DPPA  
Ms. Sandya Prasad, Chief of Administration, UNDRR  
Mr. Knut Rosandhaug, Coordinator, UNAKRT  
Mr. Paul Rwakibale, Chief of Mission Support, UNOCA  
Ms. Pia Stefanizzi, Chief of Mission Support, BINUH  
Mr. Michael Sylver, Executive Officer, ECE  
Mr. Dennis Thatchachaiwalit, Director of Administration, UNOV  
Mr. Mario Tuason, Executive Officer, DESA  
Mr. Kyle Ward, Director a.i., OHCHR  
Ms. Menada Wind-Andersen, Executive Officer, OCHA  
Ms. Xuejun Zhou, Chief of Service, Business Partner, DMSPC



**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

10 December 2020

Excellency,

As the world continues to respond to the crisis stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, the United Nations remains steadfast in its determination to continue to assist the most vulnerable across the globe.

My senior leadership team and I have never been more cognizant of the threat to our personnel both at Headquarters and in the field, upon whom we rely to deliver the mandates of the United Nations to Member States and to their societies in the most challenging of circumstances. Throughout the pandemic, our operations have been guided by several key objectives: supporting national authorities to help protect vulnerable communities and to continue to deliver on critical mandates; supporting countries to contain and mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus and the associated socioeconomic consequences of the pandemic; and protecting our personnel and their capacity to continue to support critical operations.

I, therefore, seek your commitment to ensure that United Nations personnel and their families serving within your borders, are included in your national planning for immunization.

As the availability and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine evolve and we work together to find the best solutions towards our common objective of vaccinating the global population, it will be critical to reduce mortality by ensuring the protection of health-care systems and the safety of the most vulnerable groups. As part of our collective responsibility, we must ensure the initial distribution of the vaccines to all high priority groups within countries, particularly those who operate in high to very high risk environments, such as health-care and other essential front-line workers; older adults defined by age-based risk specific to country/region; and individuals with underlying medical conditions. As supplies of the vaccines become more readily available, so will the possibilities to vaccinate additional segments of populations.

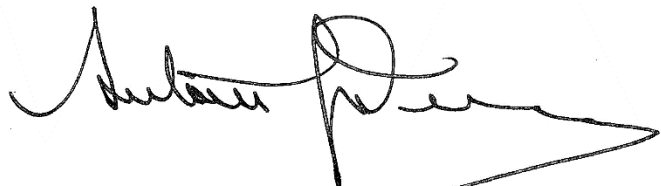
All Permanent Representatives of Member States  
of the United Nations  
New York



The United Nations has also begun engagement with the COVAX Facility, established by the vaccine pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator to ensure the fair allocation and equitable access of eventual COVID-19 vaccines among all countries. This Facility aims to rapidly provide equitable global access to a safe and effective vaccine to all subscribing countries and has been developed under the leadership of Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, the World Health Organization and other global partners. The COVAX Facility brings all participating countries together, regardless of their economic means, for the pooled procurement and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. Member States that are able to provide the necessary financial support to the COVAX Facility are strongly encouraged to do so.

I am encouraged and reassured by our collective efforts to respond to the pandemic and wish to renew my appeal to all to stay the course and demonstrate our shared determination, solidarity and unwavering commitment to advance peace, security and development.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



António Guterres