

**Draft – Vaccine Procurement Update
Minister Anand Remarks
Presser for COVID-19 Update
September 25, 2020**

Introduction:

Good afternoon, thank you for joining us today.

As we continue to see a rise in confirmed COVID-19 infections this week, I will echo the Prime Minister's words and again thank those who are working diligently to halt this pandemic.

As we work to prevent the spread of COVID-19, our government is taking all the steps necessary to be ready to respond to a resurgence.

My department, the Department of Public Services and Procurement, will continue its efforts in relation to acquiring personal protective equipment, treatments, and essential tests.

Vaccine Announcement

I will now provide an update on our Government's efforts to ensure that Canadians will have access to safe and effective vaccines once those vaccines are approved.

The global market for vaccines remains intense and unpredictable.

The contractual negotiations are complex and not simply a matter of distributing a standard form contract and having vaccine suppliers agree to our preferred terms.

Each supplier, and therefore each negotiation, is unique with its own set of concerns.

The resulting bespoke agreements contain terms specifying the quantity, price, anticipated delivery schedule, manufacturing and finishing parameters for each vaccine.

The Government of Canada has already secured access to vaccine candidates and therapeutics, while investing in manufacturing here at home.

In addition, to enable the distribution of vaccines to Canadians, the Government has made further investments in syringes, vials and swabs.

As I have said, when a vaccine is ready, Canada will be ready.

In addition to the previously announced agreements with Johnson & Johnson, Novavax, Pfizer, Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline, and now AstraZeneca, Canada has access to a guaranteed minimum of seventy-four million doses of potential vaccines to protect Canadians and save lives.

The safety and security of Canadians is our top priority. The government will continue to explore and pursue all promising alternatives to ensure the supply of potential vaccines and therapeutics in the interest of the health and safety of Canadians.

I must note that these vaccines will only be distributed once the hard work of trials and studies is completed, and Health Canada

grants regulatory approval after it reviews the vaccines for safety, efficacy and manufacturing quality.

Only then will the vaccines be offered to Canadians.

COVAX/Gavi Announcement

I will turn now to international efforts.

We know that vaccinating Canadians alone will not suppress the virus in the long term or bring an end to this pandemic.

COVID-19 does not recognize international boundaries.

As the Prime Minister and Minister Gould have stated, Canada is committed to global collaboration to end this pandemic.

We have consistently highlighted the multilateral cooperation achieved through the Gavi COVAX Facility, a pooled procurement mechanism for the purchase of COVID-19 vaccines.

This Facility can allow us to accomplish together what none of us could accomplish alone.

I am also pleased to be here today for the announcement of another agreement signed by the Government of Canada for its participation in the COVAX Facility.

Canada will therefore have access to total of up to 15 million doses of additional vaccines, and countries who otherwise would be unable to procure vaccines will have the chance to get them.

Supporting other countries in their fight against COVID-19 and other infectious diseases reflects our Canadian values of helping those in need both in Canada and internationally, and it is an investment in helping to bridge us back to normalcy.

The COVAX Facility offers the largest actively managed portfolio of vaccine candidates globally.

It includes nine candidates so far, with potentially more to be added.

The vaccines that Canada anticipates receiving via the COVAX Facility are in addition to the doses that we will obtain through the arrangements already executed between Canada and vaccine developers.

By supporting COVAX, we are continuing to diversify our investment in potential supply, and we are committing to assist low-income countries.

With these announcements today, our government has now secured access to total of 12 vaccine candidates so far, which will ensure that once these vaccines are proven safe and effective, Canadians will be able to receive them.

Closing

Finally, the government will continue to do everything possible to ensure the safety of Canadians, and that includes obtaining vaccines to protect people against COVID-19.

I would like to thank those who are working on the front lines, and those who are working so hard in the background to develop treatments and vaccines to fight the virus, not to mention all the Canadians who continue to follow the advice of health authorities to slow the spread of the disease.

The Government of Canada will continue to work collaboratively with provinces and territories to respond to this pandemic and to keep Canadians safe through effective vaccinations.

Let me repeat: when vaccines are ready, Canada will be ready.

Thank you.