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Subject: FYI to MO - Transcript - BNN - Interview with Minister Anita Anand

Evening Cecely, James,

For your information. Here is the transcription from the Minister's interview with BNN.

Charles.

Program:	COVID-19 Fallout	DATE:	2020-Aug-31 3:00PM	Time:	3:00PM - 4:00PM
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HEADLINE: Interview with Minister Anita Anand

GREG BONNELL (SHOW HOST): Let's talk now about vaccines. This will be a huge part of the story obviously for COVID-19 as we continue to work our way through the challenges. Canada signing deals with several companies, securing COVID-19 candidates could provide the country with up to 140 million doses of the vaccine by as early as next spring. Joining us now with some insight Anita Anand the Public Services and Procurement minister. Thanks for joining us minister and I guess the strategy here is: secure deals with a few different companies so we not left out in the cold of perhaps the one that we bet on doesn't end up being a viable vaccine.

ANITA ANAND (The Public Services and Procurement minister): That's generally speaking correct and it is great to be here with you. I will say that we not just talking about a few suppliers. The task of the vaccine task force that was announced at the beginning of August is to procure from multiple suppliers so we do not put all our eggs in one basket, so yes you are correct. At this point we do not know which vaccine or vaccines is going to be successful and so we need to make sure we have a diversified procurement strategy, so that Canadians are well placed when the vaccine or vaccines are developed.

BONNELL: Minister earlier today on a different show I had an interesting conversation with a medical expert south of the border. Talking about the U.S. strategy and it's one thing to get the vaccine as we get to decide who gets them first. What is the process there in terms of who should be in front of the line for this?

ANAND: Well we have to remember that vaccines are not mandatory in Canada and so there will not be a blanket mandatory decree that everyone has to have a vaccine. Having said that, your question about who's at the front of the line is a good one and it's one that we must undertake with the provinces and territories because it's an area of provincial jurisdiction. But we have a very collaborative relationship with the provinces and territories and we look forward to having that conversation.

CATHERINE MURRAY (SHOW CO-HOST): Minister what are some of those conversations about in terms of obviously we would think you have close contact with some of the drug makers to hopefully understand who should get the vaccine first. What have you learned?

ANAND: The conversations that we have had at Public Service and Procurement with the vaccine suppliers have been related primarily to the contracts that we are executing with multiple suppliers to ensure that Canada has multiple doses at their disposal. So for example as a result of the four agreements that we have in place now we have insured that in aggregate that Canada has an access to a 190 million doses. Those are the types of conversations that we are having with vaccine developers and in addition to that particular part of the contract we are also focusing of course on production and fill and finish and I also announced today that we have procured from the NRX - a company in Burnaby British Columbia three fill and finish machines to assist in the production and manufacturing vaccines here in Canada.

MURRAY: Hmm. Let's talk maybe a little bit more about that. In terms of made in Canada solutions. Where are we? You obviously just mentioned something now, but where could we be in terms of procurement and supplies, what are we thinking in terms of the strategy here for made in Canada solutions?

ANAND: Well it's a fantastic because just like in PPE race that we have been in for the last six month we also need to make sure that Canadian companies and Canadian developers are also involved in this game and you may have heard that this morning the Prime Minister in fact announced that the government of Canada will invest a 100 million dollars over two years to build a new facility in Montreal out of the national research council and that will enable the NRC to increase vaccine manufacturing by up to two million doses a month. And so Biomanufacturing right here in Canada is exactly right Catherine we got to make sure we keep our eye on this ball as well.

MURRAY: In a follow up the last time we spoke, we talked about how competitive is, it is to secure supply. Of course people are wondering what kind of costs this is and do we have to kind of up the bid in order to make sure that we in Canada get the supply. Which I know you don't want to answer necessarily because it is a competitive situation but give us an update in terms of what it's like right now competing against other governments four vaccines?

ANAND: Well thank you for that very insightful question. The competition as we discussed is very intense and it is not simply a matter of the government of Canada coming to the table with a standard form contract and placing it with the supplier and having ready acceptance. The negotiation is intense, complex and delicate and varies from supplier to supplier. And so what we have done is to be very aggressive in this negotiations indicating the delivery timeline thus being very important for Canada. So that we can make sure that Canadians are well placed when a vaccine or vaccines is developed but as you say we have got to be aggressive in this negotiations as we have been and while we have announced four contacts: Novavax, Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson we still have a ways to go. In fact we are negotiating with other suppliers at the current time including AstraZeneca and we will have more to say on those contracts in the coming weeks.

BONNELL: Minister we only have 30 seconds but if you are still talking with others? We talked in the beginning about it. The deals we have so far for securing up to a 114 million doses, how many doses you think we need for our population, what's your target?

ANAND: Well that's a very good and understandable question but at the current time with vaccines being not mandatory for Canadians it's not simply a matter of taking the Canadian

population and saying that's the amount we need to procure. There are number of different nuances including the fact that some vaccine producers will require to doses of their vaccine. So what we've done from the contractual perspective to address this nuances is to say look let's contract for a base number of doses with options to procure more. In the case of the vaccine that is successful and in the case of a vaccine that addresses a particular demographic that we need to attend to. And so there is flexibility from the government of Canada stand point in our contract so that we can go back to this suppliers at our discretion and exercise this options.

BONNELL: Thanks for taking the time to speak with us today minister.

ANAND: Well thank you so much. Have a great day.

BONNELL: Anita Anand is the Procurement minister.

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