



# news release

## **Innovative vaccine and medicine industry applaud country commitments to COVAX Facility as a significant step towards equitable access to COVID vaccines**

Geneva, 21 September 2020: Vaccine makers, and biopharmaceutical industry more generally, are encouraged to see the broad international support the COVAX Facility has received today.

The 156 economies committed to participate in the Facility, including 64 higher income economies, represent the best chance the world has to ensure that by 2021, 64% of the global population has access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines. In so doing, wealthier countries are showing their solidarity towards others. Vaccine makers reaffirm their unstinting support for this most ambitious pandemic-response initiative ever conceived.

IFPMA, the body representing the biopharmaceutical industry globally is a founding member of the ACT-Accelerator of which the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX) is a key pillar. The vaccine industry has a seat at the table in acknowledgement of the industry's key role in research, development and its expertise in being able to scale up manufacturing to unprecedented levels.

*"It is very encouraging to see so many countries move from talk to full commitment. The Facility can only work, and equitable access can only be achieved, if there is solidarity between rich and poorer countries. Today vaccine makers who have the unique skills and expertise to scale up manufacturing to levels never seen before, stand ready, together, to take up the challenge of providing two billion doses of yet unknown COVID-19 vaccines. This is no mean feat, as it requires doubling existing capacity in record time. Today, marks a significant step forward, and is a historic mark of solidarity which has the power to bring the acute phase of this pandemic to an end; and we are proud to be part of this unique endeavour to leave no one behind"* said Thomas Cueni, Director General of the IFPMA.

From day one, vaccine makers have stepped up in an unprecedented manner, [with leading innovative companies devoting](#) resources, expertise, know-how and intellectual assets to developing potential vaccines. However, we are deeply aware that science and innovation are only part of the equation. As part of our responsibility towards society, we must also ensure equitable global access to safe, high quality, effective, and affordable COVID-19 vaccines. This is why it is so important to partner with multilateral organizations like the WHO and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and CEPI to identify the global need and, along with donor governments and philanthropic foundations, address the unique challenges faced by low-income and middle-income countries.

COVID-19 is cruelly driving home a tough lesson: facing any global health challenge, in particular of such unprecedented scale, requires solidarity and inclusive cooperation. Governments are all understandably eager to protect their citizens, and their investments have contributed to the much-needed acceleration of development and upscaling of manufacturing capacity that the world needs.

The COVAX Facility has a unique objective of making sure that all countries have access to the broadest portfolio of COVID-19 vaccine candidates across a range of technologies, regardless of their ability to pay. It is specifically designed to maximize the chances of success by investing in the development and manufacture of a large number of vaccine candidates at the same time.

As we continue working towards a common shared goal of bringing the pandemic to an end, we must also prepare for the obstacles that we face in reaching vulnerable populations in each corner of the world. This includes manufacturing at risk billions of doses of a yet unknown vaccine thus doubling if not tripling current capacity, as well as preparing for a massive distribution of vaccines that may have unique logistical attributes.



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## **About IFPMA**

IFPMA represents the research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical industry's 2 million employees discover, develop, and deliver medicines and vaccines that improve the life of patients worldwide. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

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