



Tunis, 17 March 2021 – Tunisia received today the first batch of 93 600 doses of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines through the COVAX Facility. This delivery is part of a first wave of arrivals that will continue during the year, with the goal of vaccinating 20% of the population in Tunisia.

“This shipment represents an important step in the fight against COVID-19 and Tunisia is delighted to receive this first batch of vaccines through the COVAX initiative. The country has prepared well for its vaccination campaign and is committed to providing the vaccine for free and in a way that guarantees access for all residents in Tunisia (18 years and above) to the vaccine without any discrimination,” said Faycal Ben Salah, Tunisia’s Director General of Health. “We are confident that the national vaccination campaign, launched on Saturday 13

March and which benefited nursing staff as a priority, will allow us to vaccinate priority people everywhere across the country" he added.

Ben Salah concluded by thanking all and partners who made it possible for Tunisia to receive vaccines against COVID-19 via the COVAX Facility, including the deputies of the Assembly of the Representatives of the People who allowed the acceleration of procurement and delivery procedures.

"Today is an important date which marks Tunisia's efforts in its fight against COVID-19. Vaccination will save lives and protect the Tunisian health system," said Dr Yves Souteyrand, WHO Representative in Tunisia. "We are pleased that the country can have free access to vaccines that benefit from all guarantees of quality, safety, and efficacy. Access to the vaccine will be gradual and it is important to continue to adopt barrier gestures and to apply public health measures that have been shown to be effective in preventing the transmission of the virus. WHO will continue to support Tunisia to protect the health of Tunisians."

"Within the framework of this initiative, UNICEF is leading the purchase and delivery as well as the contribution to the preparation of countries for vaccination against COVID -19. I am delighted that Tunisia today receives the first batch of vaccine against COVID-19 through the COVAX mechanism and welcomes Tunisia's decision to make this vaccine available to all eligible people. 'in a free and fair manner,'" said Mrs Marilena Viviani, UNICEF Representative in Tunisia.

The COVAX Initiative also provided the Ministry of Health with a set of 506 400 syringes and 1100 safety boxes. During the months of March and April, Tunisia will also receive, as part of this initiative, 412 000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines and other quantities will follow by the end of the year.

WHO and UNICEF take this opportunity to reiterate their thanks to all the financial partners of the COVAX initiative, in particular the United States, the European Union and its Member States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, Norway, Saudi Arabia for their financial contribution to ensure equitable access to the vaccine against COVID-19 in the world.

The COVAX initiative is a global partnership between GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, the Coalition

for Innovations in Epidemic Preparedness (CEPI), the World Health Organization and UNICEF. This initiative aims to accelerate the development of and access to COVID-19 vaccines. It builds on collaboration with manufacturers of COVID-19 vaccines and aims to ensure equitable access to vaccines for countries around the world, that meet the safety and efficacy criteria established by WHO. It plans to deliver 2 billion doses of vaccine against COVID-19 during this year.

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