

DAMASCUS, 23 January 2022 – Syria has recently received 151 200 doses of COVID-19 vaccine donated by the Government of Japan through the COVAX Facility. The donation is part of the continuous efforts to protect people of Syria from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The Government of Japan has provided approximately 150 000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines manufactured in Japan, through the COVAX Facility, to the people of Syria, as part of assistance by Japan to contribute to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in Syria. Japan will continue to provide various assistance in cooperation with relevant countries and international organizations towards the earliest convergence of COVID-19,” said Mr Akira Endo, Special Coordinator for Syria and Charge d’Affairs, Embassy of Japan in Syria.

Since the pandemic began in March 2020, Syria has reported a total of 50 502 confirmed cases of COVID-19 including 2926 deaths. The vaccine coverage in Syria is among the lowest in the world. Only 4.8% of the total population have been fully vaccinated to date. Ensuring a predictable and equitable distribution of the vaccines as well as enhancing their uptake will be critical in vaccinating and keeping more vulnerable Syrians safe.

“I am grateful to the Government of Japan, long-standing supporter of Syria, for this timely contribution of COVID-19 vaccines,” said Akjemal Magtymova, Head of Mission and WHO Representative in Syria. “Along with other impactful donations to the health sector, this batch will help save more lives as we curb the pandemic,” Dr Magtymova added.

WHO and UNICEF, together with partners, continue supporting efforts to provide safe and equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines through microplanning, managing cold chain systems, training vaccinators, and promoting the safety and uptake of the vaccine.

“I would like to thank the Government of Japan for providing Syria these much-needed doses,” said UNICEF Syria Representative, Bo Viktor Nylund. “When we vaccinate more people, particularly healthcare workers, we can continue providing essential and lifesaving health services for Syrian children and their families,” he added.

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## Notes to editor

Just over 2 million doses of vaccines against COVID-19 have been administered to date. Only 4.8% of the total population have been fully vaccinated, most with two doses, and 9.4% have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

The numbers above do not include the figures from northwest of Syria. In the northwest, more than 268 600 people have received their first dose and nearly 136 500 people their second one.

## About UNICEF

UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. For more information about UNICEF and its work for children, visit [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

## About WHO

The World Health Organization works with 194 Member States across six regions and from more than 150 offices to provide global leadership in public health, promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable. Our goal for 2019-2023 is to ensure that a billion more people have universal health coverage, to protect a billion more people from health emergencies, and provide a further billion people with better health and wellbeing. For more information about WHO and its health agenda, visit [www.who.int](http://www.who.int) .

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