

Press Statement: 57,600 COVID-19 vaccine doses received today in Tripoli

Tripoli, Libya, 08 April 2021 – Today, the first shipment of COVAX procured COVID-19 vaccine containing 57,600 doses, arrived at Mitiga International Airport in Tripoli.

This first batch of vaccines has been earmarked for priority groups in Libya including Health workers in isolation and filtration centers, people above 75 years of age, people with chronic diseases, other health workers in the different Health facilities (other than isolation and filtration centers). The vaccines will be distributed to vaccination centres throughout the country, based on a distribution plan designed in coordination with the national health authorities in Libya.

“We are delighted that the first batch of COVAX vaccines has arrived in Libya”, said Dr. Ali Al-Zinati, Minister of Health. “Libya is a self-financing participant in the COVAX Facility. Altogether, we have ordered enough doses of vaccine to immunize at least around 1,374,200 people. We expect additional doses to be delivered as early as the end of this month.”

“This is a great step forward for Libya”, said Ms Elizabeth Hoff, the WHO Representative in Libya. “Vaccines are a critical new tool in the battle against COVID-19. However, for the foreseeable future, we must continue to wear masks, maintain physical distancing and avoid crowds. Being vaccinated does not mean that we can throw caution to the wind and put ourselves and others at risk.”

UNICEF is committed to continue its support to the Government of Libya in its fight against COVID-19. The arrival of vaccines in the country is an important milestone for protecting health workers and other vulnerable groups. UNICEF will continue to provide the support for safe delivery, use of the vaccines and Risk Communication and Community Engagement.” said Abdulkadir Musse, Special Representative, UNICEF Libya. “We are grateful to our donors – the European Union, the Governments of Germany, United States of America, Japan for their dedicated support to the campaign.”

WHO, UNICEF and health authorities and partners will work hand in hand to ensure that every Libyan is vaccinated against COVID-19 virus.

Note to Editors:

The COVAX Facility is a global partnership comprising the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, UNICEF and WHO. Its aim is to accelerate the development and production of COVID-19 vaccines, and to guarantee fair and equitable access to vaccines for every country in the world. COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and the World Health Organization (WHO). COVAX works in

partnership with UNICEF – a key implementing partner – as well as with civil society organisations, vaccine manufacturers, the World Bank, and others.

Full COVAX News Note to Editors:

<https://www.who.int/initiatives/act-accelerator/covax/covax-news-note-to-editors>

List of donor pledges to the Gavi COVAX AMC:

<https://www.gavi.org/sites/default/files/covid/covax/COVAX-AMC-Donors-Table.pdf>

UNICEF COVAX page:

<https://www.unicef.org/supply/covax-ensuring-global-equitable-access-covid-19-vaccines>

Media contacts:

Suad Al Marani, Communication Specialist salmarani@unicef.org, +218 91 25 08 648

Alla Salaheddine Almsri, Communication Officer Aalmsri@unicef.org, +218 91 00 12 129

Yahya Bouzo, Communication Officer, Bouzoy@who.int, +218 91 00 23 081