



health

Department
Health
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



MEDIA RELEASE

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SOUTH AFRICA'S COVAX PARTICIPATION SECURED AS SOLIDARITY FUND CONCLUDES DOWN PAYMENT

Johannesburg, 21 December 2020 – The National Department of Health and the Solidarity Fund are pleased to announce that the down payment of 19,2 million USD (amounted to R283m at the exchange rate at time of payment) has been made to GAVI (the Vaccine Alliance) to secure South Africa's entry into the COVAX facility. The payment was made in line with the Fund's previous allocation of funds and commitment to support Government's efforts to accelerate the roll-out of vaccines in South Africa.

COVAX has confirmed South Africa's entry into the facility. The down payment represents 15% of the total cost of securing access to vaccines for 10% (roughly 6 million) of the population. The country's membership in the COVAX facility ensures that South Africa receives its equitable share of the vaccine once it becomes available.

"There can be no doubt that a COVID-19 vaccine will play an important role in helping South Africa manage the virus." Says Gloria Serobe, Chairman of the Solidarity Fund, "the Solidarity Fund was set up for exactly this purpose – to be additive to the work of Government and assist in initiatives and programmes that have the greatest impact in the fight against the pandemic. The Fund is grateful to be in a position to assist at this crucial juncture."

The Department of Health's Director-General, Dr Sandile Buthelezi: "I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Solidarity Fund for providing the financial support that has enabled the country to meet the down payment obligations as required in terms of the agreement. The Department of Health will make additional payments in relation to vaccines delivered under the COVAX facility as they fall due over the next year."

The Minister of Health, Dr Zwelini Mkhize, has hailed this milestone as the epitome of excellence in health service delivery through multilateralism: "It is a privilege to oversee a

process that has brought together government, international partners and business for the sole purpose of delivering quality health care to the people of South Africa. This is what we have been advocating for when we speak of multi-sectoral collaboration and it is gratifying to see this spirit being harnessed for the good of our people, Africans and the global village. We convey our sincere gratitude to the Solidarity Fund for their unwavering support to government to ensure that no-one gets left behind as we seek to protect our most vulnerable citizens against the scourge of COVID-19.

The collaboration with the COVAX Facility will continue as South Africa ramps up efforts to put the necessary systems and processes in place to ensure that, amongst other health systems strengthening and logistical requirements, the cold supply chain is ready to immunize the population identified.

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