

Dear colleagues,

I would like to thank the Commission for the proposed vaccine strategy.

Over the last couple of days the Netherlands, together with Germany, France and Italy have been working on an alliance, with the aim to come up with agreements with different pharmaceutical companies, in order to make sure Europe would have access to Covid-vaccins. A fundamental principle of the alliance is not to ensure vaccines for ourselves but to work on an opt-in basis, so all EU-member states can join the agreement reached and have affordable access. This is very important to us as members of our European Community.

We deemed this was necessary in the light of the severe effect on all our societies, but also world wide developments, in which different countries in the world were already engaging in cooperation agreements for Covid-vaccins.

In our eyes, swift action was needed.

In parallel, we have of course started conversations with the European Commission, so we could join our capacities in order to come with the best deals possible for the EU.

*Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands are on the way close a first agreement and a second agreement is being worked on.*

These agreements open the door for all of us to sign pre-procurement contracts for each of our countries, under the same conditions.

The intentions of the four countries of the Alliance are very much in line with today's proposals by the Commission.

We would like to team up in the next week, and we would like to discuss in which way it will work best.

Therefore at some important points we believe adjustments are needed in today's proposal. For example in situations when

other parties than the Commission can have the lead in closing a specific deal, with a collective goal in mind.

However, I believe this won't stop us from finding common ground.

I truly believe this cooperation is a show of strength for the European Union and its member states and will pave the way for us all to gain access to Covid-vaccines as soon as possible.

I thank you.