Minutes: Steering Board meeting, 15 January 2021

1. Update on the allocation of doses ("Bazaar activities")

Two revised distributions on the top-up doses for **Moderna** and **BioNTech/Pfizer** were discussed ahead of the meeting. The ''Bazaar'' process for the additional Pfizer doses and Curevac was finally **closed**.

Members were reminded about the importance of (i) providing feedback **on time** on the Bazaar processes (some tables were opened for more than one month) and (ii) of staying united for the future contracts in order to benefit from the contractual clauses and prevent later issues.

Moderna -Top up

The Members were reminded to indicate as soon as possible whether they wanted or not top-up doses for Modera vaccine, especially given the higher price, and to indicate the wanted volume, as clarity was necessary on the overall top-up volume.

The Members were briefed about the details of the top-up offer (price) as well as the proposed schedule.

The Commission scheduled a Steering Board meeting with the representatives of Moderna, immediately after the ordinary SB so Members would have the possibility to seek for clarification to all their questions during this meeting.

Pfizer/BioNTech

In light of the rumours appeared on the same day regarding the delays in deliveries of the Pfizer vaccine, the Commission organised a meeting after the SB meeting and urged the Member States to also take a strong position during the discussions and urge the company to stick to the schedule.

It was agreed that the company needed to deliver a clear schedule with clear deliverables.

It was clarified that the top-up would need to be endorsed by a new contract, in order to comply with the procurement procedures

As the interest of the MSs was high for the top up doses, the Commission stressed that the optional 100M top-up doses could be inserted in the contract.

The Member agreed to distribute the 200M doses according to the pro rata principle and to open a pre-Bazaar process for the 100M optional top up.

COVAX

The Commission representative informed that on that day the WHO and COXAV would announce a contract with Pfizer for 40 million doses in 2021 of which around 1 Million doses staring the second half of February (final schedule still to be confirmed).

Some Members stressed that further discussions is necessary on how to manage the resale/donation in the current situation.

Regarding the donations, it was outlined that three groups were targeted:

- Reselling or donating to LMICs through WHO/COVAX-
- Western Balkans and Neighbourhood
- Humanitarian aid for vulnerable people in non-deserved areas (refugee camps, conflict areas)

It was agreed that more concrete action was needed, therefore the MSs need to provide clarity regarding

- which MSs would like to resell/donate, on which quantities and timeframe
- the number of doses each MSs would like to resell /donate.

The Commission underlined that the **resell/donations** needed to respect the **contractual provisions** of the **APAs** and drew the attention that the MSs that would be tempted to donated without the consent of the company could be exposed to contractual sanctions by the latter. A recent example of donations of doses by a MS to Albania was outlined.

Implementation of the contracts
The Commission stressed that it was making all the efforts to solve the issues linked to the implementation of the contracts and delivery schedules.

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Curevac- the Members were reminded that all the Order Forms needed to be sent by 22 January to the Commission.

Astra Zeneca-the company should send a weekly delivery schedule. The Company suggested to organize a meeting on Wednesday only on logistics.

Moderna – the company asked from the MSs for a list with contacts of national transporters, to address possible issues regarding the transport between the hubs and the distribution centres.

Meeting with Moderna- on Top up doses

Moderna representatives stressed in their introductory remarks that:

- the company was expanding and made significant investments in Europe;
- in order to present an offer that would satisfy the EU MSs the company had to redirect doses from other countries;
- the price proposed to the EU MSs was the lowest the company was offering to any high income country;
- the vaccine produced Moderna had a high efficiency rate (95%);
- the company had two similar sources of supply : EU and US ;
- while the company would do it's best to supply EU MSs from European production (less costly also for the company) the best approach in their view to supply as fast as possible would be to have regulatory flexibility regarding the two supply chains. The Company said that with the change in the US administration, the risk of unilateral action by the US would be low.

The Commission clarified the value of the top up could impact the procedure.

The Company asked the MSs to indicate which of the three options submitted regarding the quantities would be retained by them.

The Company was informed that the Member States were still compiling the number of doses wanted which would provide a clearer idea on the overall volume in the course of the following week.

This would be communicated via a letter to the company immediately after.

Meeting with BioNTech/Pfizer

In order to urgently address the information appeared on the same days about delays in the Pfizer deliveries, the Commission ungently convened a meeting between the company and the Steering Board.

Prior to the meeting with the MSs, the Commission:

- had informed the company about the fact that this situation was shocking and unacceptable,
- warned about the problems this would create at all levels -including at the highest political one- and
- urged the company to come to the meeting with the MSs with an acceptable solution that would as it was unthinkable to compromise the national vaccination strategies.

A **preparatory SB meeting** was held where **almost all the Members**, in a *tour de table*, reported that the local representatives of Pfizer informed them on the same day of issues regarding the reduction in the number of doses delivered for the next 4 weeks. Additionally, some MSs stressed that they had already been invoiced for the 6th dose.

During the meeting, almost all Member States intervened indicated that they were shocked about the information received from Pfizer, that it was totally unacceptable and it would raise huge problems in the implementation of the national vaccination strategies.

Pfizer representatives explained that:

- the company had developed a plan that would allow the scale-up of manufacturing capacities in Europe and deliver significantly more doses in the second quarter;
- to accomplish this, certain modifications of production processes were required now. As a result, the facility in Puurs would experience a temporary reduction in the number of doses delivered;
- the company heard the Member States complaints and proposed as a solution that reduction in the number of doses delivered would only affect the upcoming week (with a shortfall of 40% with 6th dose) instead 3 to 4 weeks as originally foreseen;
- the company reassured that they would be back to the original schedule 100% of deliveries to the European Union beginning the week of **January 25,** with **increased delivery** beginning week of **February 15** resulting in their ability to deliver the fully committed quantity of vaccine doses in the first quarter and significantly more in the second quarter;
- the company would inform about updated delivery schedules the European Commission, EU member states and other countries impacted by the changes.