

## **First Meeting of the Steering Board under the joint EU approach to COVID-19 vaccines procurement**

**18 June 2020**

### **Minutes of the meeting**

#### **1. Constitution of the Steering Board**

The Commission opened the meeting by thanking all Member States for having appointed a member to the Steering Board at record time. Speed is of the essence in order to secure sufficient supplies of safe and effective vaccines for the EU.

The Commission recalled that the Steering Board includes senior officials from all Member States to assist and provide guidance throughout the evaluation process of vaccines candidates under the joint EU approach. The Commission noted that some Member States still need to formally endorse the agreement on the joint EU approach and called on them to urgently do so.

Members of the Steering Board were invited to send a signed copy of the declaration of absence of conflict of interest and respect of confidentiality to the functional mailbox [EC-vaccines@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EC-vaccines@ec.europa.eu) by 19 June COB.

#### **2. Selection of the co-chair**

The Steering Board agreed by consensus on the appointment of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] will join Ms Sandra Gallina (designated Deputy Director General DG SANTE, Commission Co-chair) in co-chairing the Steering Board.

#### **3. Designation of the joint negotiation team**

The Commission recalled the importance of establishing a team with strong negotiation expertise. Provenance of experts from Member States with established production capacity for vaccines would also be an asset, as this would facilitate verification of compliance with good manufacturing practices, and regulatory requirements. Expertise and contacts of the Inclusive Vaccine Alliance should be the starting point for setting up the negotiation team in order to ensure continuity of action and build on progress achieved.

Members of the Steering Board agreed with the approach and stressed that time is of the essence, as the first contracts should be signed in weeks. In light of the above, the Steering Board agreed that the joint negotiation team will be composed of Commission's experts and experts from DE, ES, FR, IT, NL, PL and SE in variable composition. These experts would enjoy the support of their national administrations as regards scientific, legal financial expertise.

#### 4. Draft rules of procedure of the Steering Board

The Commission presented the draft circulated ahead of the meeting and explained that the envisaged rules of procedure remain light in order to ensure a flexible and rapid governance.

Members of the Steering Board were invited to submit comments, if any, by 19 June COB. In the absence of feedback, the rules of procedure would be considered adopted.

#### 5. Status quo of contacts with industry and next steps

The Commission and Member States updated each other on the contacts with industry so far.

##### **Johnson & Johnson / Janssen**

█ and the Commission explained that J&J is working on a vaccine based on a non-Replicating Viral Vector (same technology as University of Oxford/Astra Zeneca) with encouraging results in animal studies. They have proposed to both the Alliance and the Commission an arrangement consisting of a) a █ grant of █ which they can draw from as needed to fund manufacturing capacity (█); b) Advance Purchase Agreements to provide the vaccines to █ million people (█). First doses would be available in █. Any funds drawn from the grant would be paid back █. J&J ask for a █ down-payment and reservation fee on these APAs upon signing. On price, J&J have said that it is "not for profit". J&J would expect Member States to provide for very far-reaching immunity from liability.

The Commission warned that significant discussions will be needed on 1) liability, as the requests are currently disproportionate; 2) commitments to purchase doses █ (as ESI money cannot be used to that purpose) and 3) manufacturing █.

█ stressed the need to move quickly as J&J has already secure a deal with the █. █ are showing a keen interest. █ confirmed its commitment to purchase vaccines for the rest of the world, and its openness to top-up ESI budget to that purpose.

##### **SANOFI**

█ and the Commission presented the vaccine being developed by SANOFI, which relies on a well-established technology with proven track-record of safety and efficacy (Protein Subunit).

Sanofi (who have partnered with GSK for the use of an adjuvant) are offering 300m doses to vaccinate 150 million people in the EU. First doses would be available in █ (this could accelerate with first deliveries earlier in the year). They are asking for a down-payment of █ of the purchase price now to support manufacturing capacity. In █, on the basis of the results of phase I/II trials, Sanofi will confirm the volume available to the EU and the EU can exercise the right to buy the vaccines, with the EU to make a █ payment. The final payment will be paid on delivery. Alongside this, Sanofi – GSK have pledged to make 200m doses available for the ACT-A Accelerator. █

## BioNTech

█ and the Commission presented the vaccine being developed by BioNTech (mRNA). They stressed that the company has an agreement with Pfizer for distribution outside Germany and that they are █ than J&J and SANOFI. BioNTech is a small biotech in need of quick █ and would propose that the EU pays a █ at this stage, and █ prices if a vaccine is proven successful. Price █ BioNTech is █ by █ than Pfizer. The financial part of any possible agreement with BioNTech needs █ as it is not clear whether █

## CureVac

The █ presented the vaccine being developed by Curevac (mRNA). Like BioNTech, also Curevac is a start-up █ (█ in 2020). Whilst Curevac believe that their vaccine could have an authorisation by █ 2021, a █ manufacturing and supply schedule, or a precise indication of total potential price, █. It is █ not clear how many of their █

## Other companies

█ provided an update on their contacts with Moderna, who is also developing an mRNA-based vaccine. The Commission informed of their exploratory contacts with other companies (█). Following the adoption of the vaccines strategy, it is expected that additional companies will approach the Commission.

## 6. Conclusion

The Steering Board agreed to prioritize next week discussions with J&J, SANOFI, BioNTech/Pfizer, CureVac and Moderna. Additional companies would also be considered, but more time might be needed. The Steering Board agreed on the importance to diversify the portfolio of technologies.

The Commission recalled that by accepting the agreement, Member States have agreed to merge the parallel negotiating tracks into a single EU approach and not to negotiate separately (Article 7). In the spirit of this Agreement, the Steering Board and the joint negotiation team would pursue any such previous contacts together. It would not be compatible with the agreement to continue separate negotiations despite having launched them before the launch of common negotiations.

The next meeting of the Steering Board will take place end of next week.