



UK Ambassador to the EU
Sir Tim Barrow

UK Mission to the European Union

10 July 2020

Ilze Juhansone
Secretary-General
European Commission

Dear Secretary-General,

Thank you for your letter of 22 June and the subsequent engagement from your officials on the possible UK participation in the joint EU approach to COVID-19 vaccines procurement. As you are aware we consider participation in EU initiatives during the Transition Period on a case by case basis.

I welcome the constructive approach to discussions between our respective teams over the last weeks to understand what UK participation in this scheme would look like, in line with both the terms of the agreement reached by participating Member States to shape this initiative, and the relevant provisions in the Withdrawal Agreement.

The Commission has responded positively to our requests for clarifications but has confirmed that it is not possible for the UK to pursue parallel negotiations with potential vaccine suppliers, meaning the UK would be required to stop its negotiations with manufacturers with which the EU launched negotiations. The Commission has also confirmed that it is not possible for the UK to have a role in the governance shaping decisions on which manufacturers to negotiate with, or the price, volume and delivery schedule negotiated.

The UK Government has decided on this occasion not to join this internal EU initiative, but given our shared interest in ensuring that vaccines are available to all, we are committed to strengthening our collaboration with the EU outside the framework. Our track record to date has been extremely strong, for example, the UK and the EU are working together to deliver equitable global access to a successful vaccine. This has included co-hosting the Global Coronavirus Pledging event on 4 May which raised \$7bn for R&D on vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics and ensuring that the Global Vaccines Summit on 4 June, which raised \$8.8bn to replenish Gavi, was a success. We are also working together closely through the Access to Covid Tools Accelerator to ensure that vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics are available to lower and middle income countries. We look forward to continued joint collaboration on this important work.

We are committed to building on this shared endeavour and believe there are other areas where we should look to strengthen our collaboration. This could include sharing of information on promising vaccine candidates; negotiations with vaccine manufacturers; vaccine trials; manufacturing investment and capacity building; mitigations to supply chain bottlenecks and other delivery risks such as global trade disruptions. We are in touch with Sandra Gallina and her team, and look forward to an early opportunity to take this collaboration forward.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Barrow', with a stylized flourish at the end.

SIR TIM BARROW
United Kingdom Ambassador to the European Union

Cc:

Tim Colley, International Director, Vaccines Task Force, UK

Céline Gauer, Deputy Secretary-General

Sandra Gallina, Deputy Director-General, DG SANTE