

**ACT-Accelerator Facilitation Council Briefing, 22 September 2021**

**Opening remarks, Mr Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway**

- Thank you very much Bruce.
- Since we last met, I would personally have hoped to be further in our battle to ensure equitable access to tests, vaccines, lifesaving oxygen and PPE.
- When we last met on 6 July, low-income countries were receiving 0.3% of the total volume of global vaccines. Now, more than 2 months later, with more than 2 billion vaccines administered, low-income countries are still only receiving 0.3 % of the total volume.
- To say this is a moral outrage is not enough. How can we as a global community continue to stand by as millions continue to needlessly be at risk of severe disease or death?
- As we speak, 100 million critical lifesaving vaccines are set to expire by the end of the year – in wealthy countries with surplus doses.
- This waste needs to stop, and it needs to stop now.
- It is in the interest of us all to ensure equal access to vaccines and other COVID-19 tools.
- Let me assure you that Norway is working hard to share vaccine doses as soon as they are made available. We expect to share 5 million doses before the end of 2021 – a number that equals the population in Norway.
- Our conversations today are critical for ending the acute phase of the pandemic and moving towards better health security for all.
- Let me remind us of our ambition to achieve vaccination of at least 40% of the population in all countries around the globe by the end of the year.
- It is crucial that we – the ACT-A Facilitation Council members – push jointly for necessary actions that are needed to get us there.
- Therefore, we must listen carefully when we later today will hear why we – more than ever - need transparency in delivery schedules to encourage immediate redistribution of vaccines that can supply COVAX and the African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team.

- Furthermore, we must push for closing the financing gap for the ACT-A, which remains the main mechanism in the fight for equity.
- I am also looking forward to hearing from the Dalberg team, which has been conducting an independent strategic review of the ACT-Accelerator. This will give us an opportunity to adjust the course of the ACT-A and make it better equipped to address the most pressing challenges caused by the pandemic.
- I invite you to engage in these discussions on what we need to do to redouble our efforts in the battle against the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Thank you! I would now like to give the floor to my South African colleague, Minister Phaahla.