

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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MTN partners with African Union on COVID-19 vaccinations in Africa

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA, 28 JANUARY 2021: In a unique public/private partnership, MTN, Africa's leading mobile network, has announced a donation of US\$25 million to support the African Union's COVID-19 vaccination programme.

The donation will help secure up to seven million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for health workers across the continent, which will contribute to the vaccination initiative of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

"The devastating impact of COVID-19 has been unprecedented and profound. Public and private partnerships are needed if we are to succeed in the fight against the pandemic and restore social and economic norms for our continent and our communities," says Ralph Mupita, President and Chief Executive Officer of MTN Group.

On 14 January 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa, Chairperson of the African Union, announced that the African Union had secured a provisional 270 million COVID-19 vaccine doses on behalf of its Member States, through advance procurement commitment guarantees of up to US\$2 billion to the manufacturers by the African Export-Import Bank.

This was a remarkable milestone in efforts to ensure equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccine for Africa's people. However, with a population of about 1.3 billion, Africa requires many more doses to achieve at least 60 percent herd immunity. Contributions by private organisations, like MTN, are therefore essential to help the continent reach its target.

"Our goal is to ensure that all those who need the COVID-19 vaccine have access to it very quickly, but the biggest hurdle in Africa has been financing of the vaccines, and the logistics of vaccinating at scale. We therefore welcome the right partnerships, like the one with MTN, to achieve our minimum 60 percent vaccination target," says Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, MTN has made significant contributions to help limit the spread of COVID-19 and save lives and livelihoods within its African market. This donation is another example of MTN's efforts to help find lasting solutions the challenges facing the continent and to guarantee a healthy Africa, for all Africans.

“We believe ongoing collaborations with key stakeholders across sectors are essential as vaccines are deployed in all our markets, with communication tools, technology and digital services being vital support infrastructure for a successful mass vaccination programme,” concludes Mupita. “In the coming months, MTN Group will look at similar support commitments for the markets in which we operate in the Middle East.”

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About the African Union

The African Union is a continental body that leads Africa’s development and integration in close collaboration with the 55 Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and African citizens. The vision of African Union is to accelerate progress towards an integrated, prosperous and inclusive Africa, at peace with itself, playing a dynamic role in the continental and global arena, effectively driven by an accountable, efficient and responsive Commission. Learn more at: <http://www.au.int/en>

About Africa CDC

Africa CDC is a specialized technical institution of the African Union that strengthens the capacity and capability of Africa’s public health institutions as well as partnerships to detect and respond quickly and effectively to disease threats and outbreaks, based on data-driven interventions and programmes. Learn more at: www.africacdc.org

About the MTN Group

Launched in 1994, the MTN Group is Africa’s leading mobile network operator with a clear vision to lead the delivery of a bold new digital world to our customers. We are inspired by our belief that everyone deserves the benefits of a modern connected life. The MTN Group is listed on the JSE Securities Exchange in South Africa under the share code ‘MTN’. We are pursuing our strategy with a major focus on growth in data, fintech and digital businesses in Africa. www.mtn.com

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