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The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations at Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and would like to refer to the letter received on the 16 August 2022 regarding the call for inputs on the subject of ensuring equitable, affordable, timely and universal access for all countries to vaccines in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic pursuant to HRC resolution 49/25. In that regard, the Permanent Mission has the honor to attach herewith the contribution of the Government of Saudi Arabia on the aforementioned letter.

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the assurance of its highest consideration.





In reference to the High Commissioner's report on the human rights implications of and good practices and key challenges in affordable, timely, equitable, and universal access to and distribution of quality, safe, efficacious, and affordable COVID-19 vaccines. In addition, with reference to the impact on everyone's right to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health based on Human Rights Council resolution 49/25 on ensuring equitable, affordable, timely, and universal access for all countries to vaccines in response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), and call by the Office of the Higher Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to provide input on the following areas¹:

(a) Human rights implications and the impact on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health in respect of receiving and distributing affordable, timely, equitable, and universal access to COVID-19 vaccines.

The Kingdom's laws guarantee the right of all to obtain healthcare, as Article (2) of Health Law states that "This Law aims at ensuring the provision and regulation of comprehensive and integrated healthcare for all the population in a fair and accessible manner". Additionally, Article (3) of the same Law stipulates "The State shall endeavor to provide Healthcare and be concerned with the Public Health of the Community in a manner that ensures living in a sound healthy environment". Moreover, Article (4) thereof emphasizes the provision of Healthcare services to citizens, including all Community segments, and situations of emergencies and disasters, infectious and epidemic disease, incurable diseases, and mental health. Furthermore, Clause (1) of Paragraph (I) of the Implementing Regulations of Private Health Institutions provides that private health institutions shall receive all ambulatory cases via emergency departments.

Saudi Arabia's laws guarantee access to health services, including physical and mental health. In this regard, healthcare centers were established and developed throughout the whole Kingdom, amounting to 2272 center until October 2020, and distributed across the Kingdom's various provinces, regions, and villages. In addition, there is an approach trend to convert hospitals and health centers into public companies to promote efficiency and increase productivity, in accordance with Kingdom's 2030 Vision. This coincided with implementing multiple strategies to foster healthcare, as well as establishing Public Health Authority and National Center for Mental Health Promotion.

¹ Reports must not exceed 4 pages, and be submitted in an accessible format (Microsoft Word). They must reach the High Commissioner's office by October 3, 2022, and be addressed to the office of the Higher Commissioner, with their subject referred to as "Input to the Human Rights Commission resolution 49/25".
Questionnaire page: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/calls-for-input/2022/call-inputs-high-commissioners-report-human-rights-implications-and-good>



In respect of combating COVID-19 pandemic, the Kingdom has taken numerous measures that contributed to fighting the pandemic. These measures based on the Human Rights-based approach. This is evident by the fact that such measures are based on the principle of equality and non-discrimination, as well as putting into practice the principle of indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights, as stipulated in Vienna Declaration and Program of Action of 1993. The measures include the following:

- Announcement by the Ministry of Health of the commencement of registration of all citizens and residents on September 15, 2020, to ensure equitable distribution of approved COVID-19 vaccines. This is done free of charge via national E-applications approved throughout the Kingdom (Sehaty and Tawakkalna). These platforms enable users to schedule an appointment to receive the vaccine, without a discrimination between citizens and foreigners. In addition, the vaccines would be provided to visitors who do not hold permanent residence permit by enabling them to schedule appointments to receive vaccines via relevant applications. This goes hand-in-hand in coordination with the Ministry of Interior to give effect to the principle of legal unaccountability when attending vaccine centers. Moreover, institutions and public and private health centers provide free healthcare services to violators of residence, labor and border security laws, without any legal consequences, thus ensuring health safety of the Kingdom and its citizens and residents. As of 29/01/2022, the number of given doses of COVID-19 vaccines exceeded 59 million, provided by more than 587 center deployed throughout the whole Kingdom.

(b) Good practices and key challenges in guaranteeing affordable, timely, equitable, and universal access to and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Kingdom has been keen on early contracting with approved vaccine manufacturers, by developing plans and measures to ensure the flow and arrival of vaccines to the Kingdom periodically and in accordance with to the timetables provided to that effect. In this vein, higher committees with broad powers were formed to carry out the task of direct contracting and purchasing of all pandemic supplies, including the vaccines; in addition to ensuring balance and developing mechanisms for the disposal of any surplus quantities through King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center. Furthermore, the scientific and national committees as well as the competent entities in the Kingdom are eager to continuously follow-up all relevant developments in vaccines and COVID-19-related drugs, as the experts and scientists are following up and contributing to COVID-19-related studies and researches, and in constant communication with the international actors, scientific centers, and qualified institutions in this regard.

As for the measures taken to avoid storing vaccines and guarantee their distribution on the international level, as well as providing assistance to other countries in this respect, the Kingdom has provided continued support towards developing tools for addressing the COVID-19



pandemic, particularly in terms of supplying vaccines to middle and low-income countries. Most notably, the Kingdom, through its presidency of the G20, contributed over USD 500 million to support COVAX, and injected a sum of USD 150 million into Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), and granted USD 200 million to other national and regional health institutions and programs. In total, the Kingdom contributed with more than USD 850 million to underpin the efforts to combat the pandemic, in addition to supporting the neediest countries with vaccines and preventive medical assistance necessary to contribute to combating the pandemic. This coupled with supplying special equipment, drugs, and medical supplies to fight the pandemic in more than 34 country around the world. The total cost of these projects exceeded USD 862,025,099. These efforts covered some countries, as well as a group of international organization such as GAVI, CEPI, and COVID-19 Combating Fund of WHO.
