



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Ursula von der Leyen
The President

Brussels, 23. 07. 2021
Ares (2021) 3399626

Dear Vice-President,

Thank you for your letter of 21 May 2021, in relation to Hungary's latest decision regarding the new joint EU procurement.

This unprecedented pandemic has a severe impact on all our Member States and EU citizens, and vaccines are our best tool to bring COVID-19 under control. This is why we launched the EU Vaccine Strategy in June 2020 to build the broadest global portfolio of safe and effective vaccines to the benefit of all EU Member States.

Our EU Vaccine Strategy is a powerful example of European collaboration and solidarity. Within 6 months, the EU secured a broad portfolio of more than 2.6 billion vaccine doses¹ for European citizens, our neighbours and third countries, and signed contracts with six companies for what has now reached up to 4.4 billion doses for this year and the years to come². Furthermore, negotiations are ongoing to secure more doses from additional promising vaccine candidates.

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¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/coronavirus-response/public-health/coronavirus-vaccines-strategy_en

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/coronavirus-response/safe-covid-19-vaccines-europeans_en#securing-doses-of-future-vaccines

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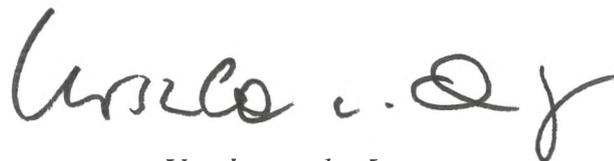
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Safe and effective vaccines have been developed and manufactured in record time, and the pace of vaccinations is progressing with increasing speed every day. We are also taking action to increase the production, delivery and roll-out of vaccines across the EU. We are continuously drawing the lessons from the first phase of our answer to the pandemic. To defeat the virus decisively, we will need to be prepared for any future challenges that may lie ahead, including in particular the challenges related to variants.

Joint action at EU level is the surest, quickest and most efficient way of achieving the objectives of the EU Vaccines Strategy. In that light, though we respect the decision by Hungary to opt-out of the third contract with BioNTech-Pfizer, we also regret it. As a result of this, Hungary will not be able to buy any doses of the vaccines which BioNTech-Pfizer will supply under that contract.

Coordinated action by the EU and its Member States is ensuring sufficient and speedy supplies of safe and effective vaccines. A common strategy allows better hedging and sharing of risks, pooling of investment and increasing negotiating power to achieve a common, strategic and essential goal for the well-being of our citizens.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ursula v. d. L.' followed by a stylized flourish.

Ursula von der Leyen