

ACS Member States to Address Vaccine Inequity in the Greater Caribbean



MEDIA RELEASE

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Public health officials from around the Greater Caribbean are set to address access to COVID-19 vaccines, equitable vaccination, logistics, communicating and all other issues related to social protection from COVID-19, as the ACS Multi-Stakeholder Task Force on COVID-19 meets next Monday (March 8), virtually. As countries in the region struggle with the impact of the pandemic on the health and prosperity of their people, and access to vaccines, the ACS is seeking to facilitate joint regional action to tackle vaccine inequity.

United Nations Secretary General António Guterres has called for more equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, noting that 10 nations are in control of 75% of the vaccines available. ACS Members have shown great solidarity, donating vaccines, research, exchanging best practices and health care workers.

The meeting will provide a forum for Members to exchange best practices and find commonalities regarding the various strains of COVID-19, the different vaccines available and national public campaigns for vaccination drives. The meeting will also facilitate discussion on procurement mechanisms and national capacity to deliver the vaccines, including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) stock, training of health care workers and storage facilities. While a large focus of the meeting will be the logistics of vaccination drives, there will also be attention on the ongoing social crisis caused by the pandemic and the disproportionate impact on vulnerable groups.

ACS Secretary General Rodolfo Sabonge says, “Herd immunity can only be reached when a sufficient number of people have developed antibodies, and that can only happen when there is equitable vaccination worldwide”.

In March 2020, ACS Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Health of ACS Members met and exchanged actions taken at the beginning of the pandemic. They established a multi-sectoral task force to facilitate cooperative action aimed at halting the negative impact of COVID-19 in the region and prepare for a different future after the pandemic. The multi-sectoral task force, comprising doctors and public health officials from 15 countries around the Greater Caribbean has been established by the ACS to facilitate cooperative action aimed at halting the negative impact of COVID-19 and preparing for a different regional future after the pandemic.

About the ACS

Established in 1994, the Association of Caribbean States is an organisation for consultation, cooperation and concerted action in the Greater Caribbean. The organisation’s work is focused on: cooperation in the areas of: disaster risk reduction; sustainable tourism; trade, transport & external economic relations; and the protection of the Caribbean Sea. The ACS has 25 Member States, 10 Associate Members 6 Founding Observers and 28 Observer Countries.