

DIASPORA DIALOGUE ON COVID-19 VACCINE: EFFICACY AND SAFETY STANDARDS

ZOOM WEBINAR / SATURDAY, 23RD JANUARY 2021, 16H-17H30 GENEVA TIME (10:00 – 11:30 AM USA ET)

According to the WHO, Coronavirus disease, SARS-CoV-2 virus, (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. Most people who fall sick with COVID-19 will experience mild to moderate symptoms and recover without special treatment.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is mainly transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or exhales. These droplets are too heavy to hang in the air, and quickly fall on floors or surfaces. One can be infected by breathing in the virus or coming in contact with a contaminated surface.

The Coronavirus Covid-19 was first discovered in Wuhan, China in December 2019. Since the discovery of the virus in Switzerland in February 2020, the country has recorded over 495'000 infections, 7'970 deaths with 318'000 recovery. (Stand on 16.1.2021, source BAG/OFSP). Worldwide, the total cases is at 94.2 million with 2.02 million deaths and 51.9 million recovery (Stand 16.1.2021, source WHO)

Many countries around the world have struggled to contain the spread of virus amid the virus spreading wildly. Different measures were put in place by different states in efforts to contain this fast contagious disease. These include social distancing (at least 2m), regular washing of hands and compulsory wearing of masks in public space, home office, lockdown policies among others. Nevertheless, the virus remains adamant and continues to spread like wildfire and is more deadly among the elderly.

The private sector and science have also joined in the efforts to save humanity from the devastation of Covid-19. Many pharmaceutical labs in different countries joined in the race to understand the characteristics of the virus and seek necessary remedy. These efforts are now yielding fruits with the development, production and approval of Covid-19 vaccines with Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, taking the lead as well as University of Oxford and AstraZeneca jab also currently being rolled out. Other producers include Sanofi-GSK, Sputnik V, Johnson & Johnson, CureVac, Novavax...

However the efficacy and safety of the Covid-19 vaccines as well as the clinical trials continue to create global controversy. At this crucial moment of inoculation campaigns worldwide, global citizens are faced with the decision to take the vaccines, it has become essential to discuss the matter openly and the webinar **aims** at sensitizing diaspora communities and clarifying any grey areas that might be associated with the Coronavirus vaccine.

It is in this vein that the organizers of this webinar have invited renowned scientists and researchers that are knowledgeable in the development, production and authorization of vaccines to enlighten on the process of the clinical trials that lead to this innovation. As **outcome**, it is expected that participants would have been sensitized and clarified outstanding questions related to Covid-19 vaccines and equipped to make an informed decision.

Participation to the webinar is open to all members of the diaspora in Switzerland, Africa and Europe, people of African Descent worldwide, as well as other members of the society that seek for clarifications on the Covid-19 vaccination.

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SPECIAL GUESTS:



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