DET KONGELIGE FINANSDEPARTEMENT
Royal Ministry of Finance

ACTaccelerator
ACCESS TO COVID-19 TOOLS

MINISTRY: FINANCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

JOINT PRESS RELEASE FROM MINISTERS SANNER AND MBOWENI

On Friday, 29 January 2021, Norway and South Africa co-hosted a high-level meeting between G20 and OECD finance ministries on how to collectively resolve the global economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, and how to mobilise the financial resources needed to succeed.

Finance Minister Tito Mboweni of South-Africa and Finance Minister Jan Tore Sanner of Norway co-chaired the meeting.

The Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, has been set up to develop, procure and promote equitable access to Covid-19 tests, treatments, vaccines and the health systems that support them world-wide. It brings together the world's leading public health organisations around a common purpose – to end the acute phase of the pandemic.

Just this week we have seen yet more compelling evidence of the need for an approach where all countries work together.

A new study commissioned by the ICC Research Foundation has found that the global economy stands to lose as much as $9.2 trillion in the absence of a multilateral coordinated response. Half of this would fall on advanced economies.

"*The ACT-A collaboration will play a decisive role to this end. In a globalised world where economic drag in one country has consequences for others, the job is not done before the virus is under control globally*", said Norway's Minister of Finance, Jan Tore Sanner.

The aim of the meeting was to raise awareness, to share advice on possible avenues to contribute, and to agree on principles for funding and equitable distribution of Covid-19 tools globally. As we see the pandemic pivots with the emergent of new, dangerous variants and over 100 million cases worldwide, the sense of urgency is high.

"*I am happy that the discussion showed that there is extensive agreement among finance ministers that cooperation on development, supply and distribution of tests, medical treatments and vaccines is pivotal – not only for people's health – but also for putting an end to the global economic crisis. Investing in global control of Covid-19 is probably the best economic stimulus we all can give our own economies*", said Finance Minister Tito Mboweni of South-Africa.

ACT-Accelerator funding commitments total US$ 6.0 billion with an additional 4 billion US$ in projected funding. The ACT-Accelerator faces a US$ 27.2 billion funding gap which will be reduced to US$ 23.2 billion as projected funds are operationalized.

G20 has identified ACT-A as an important investment opportunity in the response to Covid-19. How to strengthen the global collaboration on controlling the pandemic will be further elaborated by the G20, G7 and other important groups.

ACTaccelerator
ACCESS TO COVID-19 TOOLS

Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator high-level meeting for finance ministries on 29 January 2021

Chairs' Summary

Today, Finance Minister Tito Mboweni of South-Africa and Finance Minister Jan Tore Sanner of Norway co-chaired a high-level virtual meeting between G20 and OECD finance ministries. On the agenda was how to collectively resolve the global economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, and to explore how to mobilise the needed resources more effectively.

Presentations by high-level representatives from the WHO, IMF, European Commission, ACT-A partners and others gave an overview of the current epidemiological and economic situation, the link between the disease and the global economy, and the medical needs to end the pandemic.

Beating the Covid-19 pandemic is not a humanitarian goal only. It is also a prerequisite for a swift and sustainable recovery of the world economy and a global common good. Furthermore, accelerated global response is crucial for protecting people and the world from new viral variants that may be harder to control. The rationale for moving fast and for working together across all countries to beat this virus is clear.

The Access to Covid-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, established in April 2020, is set up to develop, procure and promote equitable access to Covid-19 tests, treatments, vaccines, and the health systems that support them world-wide. It brings together the world's leading public health organisations for a common purpose – to end the acute phase of the pandemic. Already, it has delivered on its ambition; new vaccines have significantly advanced our ability to fight the disease, new and cheaper tests provide results in less than 30 minutes and we have clear evidence that dexamethasone saves lives, while trials on other new medicines are advancing.

Participants agreed that cooperation on development, supply and distribution of tests, medical treatments and vaccines is pivotal – not only for people's health – but also for putting an end to the global economic crisis. Investing in global control of Covid-19 through equitable roll out of these technologies, is the best economic stimulus we all can give our own economies.

The participants also discussed possible tools and mechanisms for how contributions can be made to fill the remaining funding gap. For 2021 this amounts to USD 27 billion.

It was noted that while this number is large compared to today's global budgets for Official Development Assistance (ODA) it is small compared to the economic return of beating the global pandemic. If all G20 and OECD countries donate less than half a permille of their GDP, these funding needs are met.

Several participants indicated that they stand ready to contribute more.

The meeting called for multilateral cooperation, and guidance and leadership from the G20, G7 and other important players. This will be crucial for the way forward.

See the ACT-Accelerator website for more information.