

An Taoiseach Michéal Martin TD
Roinn an Taoisigh
Baile Átha Cliath 2

12ú Márta 2021

Re: Bilateral purchase agreement with United States for Covid vaccines

A Thaoiseach, a chara,

I am writing to you ahead of your virtual summit on St. Patrick's Day with US President, Joe Biden to request that you raise the issue of a potential purchase of unused Covid 19 vaccines from the United States.

As you are aware, the FDA has not approved the use of AstraZeneca in the United States. Despite this, the vaccine is currently in production in facilities in that country and it is estimated that there are upwards of 50 million doses in refrigeration.

While, of course, the United States may opt to authorise AstraZeneca for use, their production capabilities as an industrial power means that supply will outpace demand, and there will always be additional vaccines.

Taoiseach, I believe you should and must use your meeting next week with President Biden to stress the need for the US to allow the export of the AstraZeneca vaccines and indeed other forms of vaccines to other countries that want to use them. Separately for Ireland, we should seek to secure a bilateral agreement enabling the Irish Government to purchase at least 2 million AstraZeneca doses.

Ireland's special and deep relationship with the United States and President Biden's love of our country and his own Irish-American heritage lends itself well to a successful agreement being concluded. Ireland must use its position as the natural cultural and diplomatic bridge between the United States and the EU for the benefit of all.

Taoiseach, I have no doubt that this is already on your agenda, and I know that you and the Government are actively seeking new ways of increasing Ireland's supply of Covid 19 vaccines. No one can or should ever fault Ireland's Taoiseach from doing whatever he or she can to protect the lives of our citizens.

Go n-éirí an bóthar leat!
Is mise le meas,


Billy Kelleher MEP