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MEDIA RELEASE

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Australia Joins International Effort to Assist Swine Flu Vaccine Rollout in Developing Countries

Australia is today joining a group of nations, led by President Obama, in announcing a commitment to support the rollout of H1N1 vaccine to needy groups in developing countries.

As part of this effort the Australian Government is prepared to commit up to 10 per cent of its 2009 H1N1 pandemic vaccine to the World Health Organization (WHO) for use among priority groups in developing countries in our region.

This commitment follows today's TGA decision to register the vaccine and is subject to the finalisation of arrangements for supply of the vaccine to Australians.

Australia is making this commitment recognising the challenges developing countries face in accessing vaccines for the pandemic response.

Australia's commitment of vaccines will support health systems and priority groups in Pacific Island countries, Papua New Guinea, East Timor and possibly Southeast Asian countries.

In making this commitment, Australia is acting in concert with the United States, the United Kingdom, Brazil, France, Italy, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland.

Additionally, Australia has provided funds to the WHO to help distribute the vaccines to Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Islands and East Timor, our near neighbours most at risk. This will help ensure that the vaccines get to the people who need them the most.

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