



19 March 2021

The Honourable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Dear President Biden,

I am writing as a follow-up to my earlier letter of 4 March 2021, which was also written in my capacity as Chairman of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and which highlighted the debilitating impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on our Region.

The Member States of CARICOM continue to suffer from the crippling effects of this global crisis, with lives and livelihoods feeling the brunt of the economic stagnation. We are the most tourism- and travel-dependent Region in the world, and the International Monetary Fund has stated that the Caribbean, with Latin America, is among the economies most adversely affected globally by the effects of the pandemic.

The Caribbean has often been referred to as the Third Border of the United States by previous United States Administrations. Furthermore, the presence of millions of Caribbean nationals within your borders gives rise to frequent travel between our countries. Thousands of US citizens also make our Region their destination of choice for vacations.

With the foregoing in mind, the news that you have decided to share the surplus of COVID-19 Astra Zeneca vaccines in the US stockpile with the bordering nations of Canada and Mexico, is most welcome. The logic of pursuing preventative measures in neighbouring countries through administering of vaccines is irrefutable. With similar logic and given the high incidence of transmission from travel, the concept of "*neighbouring country*" could be refined to include the Member States of CARICOM.

Consequently, I believe that it would be a tangible show of support for CARICOM in confronting the severe economic and social challenges facing our people, if you were to share a quantity of vaccines with the Community, as neighbouring countries on the United States' Third Border, with strong travel, commercial and familial linkages. This would be a clear demonstration of your recognition of the maxim "*no one is safe until everyone is safe*".

I look forward to a positive response to my urgent request.

Yours faithfully,

Keith Rowley PhD
Prime Minister of the Republic of
Trinidad and Tobago
and Chairman of the Caribbean Community
(CARICOM)