

Brussels, 5 February 2021

## OPEN LETTER TO MR. GIANMARCO DI VITA DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR BUDGET AND ADMINISTRATION EEAS

### Request for equal treatment of all staff including Local Agents with regard to anti-Covid vaccination

Dear Mr Di Vita,

The Staff association **TAO-AFI** has received a significant number of messages from colleagues posted in EU Delegations following your message to staff of 29 January 2021. Our colleagues convey their dismay about the EEAS vaccination plan for staff in Delegations not being 'intended' for all staff and originally excluding Local Agents. Staff understand there may be potential complications in reaching out to staff without diplomatic status in third countries but that does not justify the lack of declared intention from the EEAS to do its utmost to treat them equally. Our colleagues are shocked that in your letter, the EEAS is not even compelled to explain why such difference of treatment.

Since 29 January, colleagues in Delegations have received other messages indicating that local agents could be included in the EEAS in-house vaccination programme. However, the underlying and fundamental breach of principle remains: the EEAS is *a priori* favour certain staff categories over others with regards to their health and safety.

**TAO-AFI** understands that managing the vaccination of such a large number of colleagues in about 140 different countries is a daunting task. We also understand that we are all learning from an unprecedented crisis and that human errors are bound to happen. What we think is unacceptable is the *a priori* unequal treatment. We hence urge EAAS management to rethink its approach and cease discrimination

among categories or functions of colleagues.

Accordingly, **TAO-AFI** requests EAAS management to unambiguously confirm as soon as possible that ALL staff working in the Delegations, regardless of their professional status and their families, will be eligible to register to the EEAS in-house vaccination campaign. Whether there are national restrictions to this is another problem to be addressed on a case-by-case basis but which should not compromise the principle of intended equal treatment. In essence, the impediment to vaccinate our colleagues should not originate from the very institution they work for. An institution, which requires their allegiance and founded on principles of international solidarity.

Beyond the above matters of principle, not vaccinating our colleagues Local agents compromises the very effectiveness of the campaign.

We look forward to the EEAS taking quick affirmative action to re-establish a much-needed sense of inclusion among all staff, which, above all, is a matter of genuine intent.

Yours sincerely,



Executive Committee

*Your TAO-AFI team:*

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**Join TAO-AFI to reinforce the staff's action and to be informed on your rights!**



**TAO-AFI, The Association of Independent Officials**

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