

## **Serbia donates COVID-19 vaccines to Bosnia's Bosniak-Croat Federation**

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### **Serbia donates COVID-19 vaccines to Bosnia's Bosniak-Croat Federation**

By Reuters Staff

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - Serbia donated 5,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Oxford University and AstraZeneca to the Bosniak-Croat region of neighbouring Bosnia on Tuesday, allowing it to start its inoculation campaign.

The Bosniak-Croat Federation, one of Bosnia's two autonomous regions alongside the Serb republic, has ordered 1.2 million vaccine doses under the global COVAX vaccine-sharing scheme, and nearly 900,000 from the European Union, but has yet to receive any.

At Sarajevo airport, Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic handed over the vaccines to members of Bosnia's tripartite presidency, Sefik Dzaferovic, Zeljko Komsic and Milorad Dodik, and pledged to send another batch of 5,000 doses in the coming days.

"I am happy that we can save ... lives with vaccines, it is important and great thing," Vucic told reporters. "Serbia is acting as a friend and a neighbour."

Bosnia is the third former-Yugoslav republic to receive vaccines from Serbia after North Macedonia and Montenegro.

"When global multilateral mechanisms ... have failed, President Vucic sent (us) an offer (for vaccines) and we have accepted it," Dzaferovic said.

Bosnia's Serb republic, which maintains close ties with Serbia, last month started inoculations with Russia's Sputnik V vaccine. Belgrade also allocated 5,000 vaccine doses to administer to medical staff from the Serb republic in Serbia.

Around 1 million people in Serbia have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. In the wider Western Balkans region, inoculations are also underway in Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania, while Kosovo and the Bosniak-Croat Federation have still to launch their campaigns.

So far, Bosnia has recorded 130,979 cases of the new coronavirus and 5,071 deaths.

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