

IVI to establish a European regional office in Sweden

IVI and the government of Sweden signed an MOU today to establish the office in Stockholm, creating a European hub for global health research and innovation

SEOUL, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, December 17, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The International Vaccine Institute (IVI), an international organization with the mission to discover, develop, and deliver safe, effective, and affordable vaccines for global health, and Sweden's Ministry for Foreign Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) today to establish an IVI regional office in Stockholm. With this new office, IVI aims to create an international hub for global health research, innovation, and collaboration in Sweden's capital.

This is IVI's first regional office outside of its headquarters in Seoul, Republic of Korea. The regional team will conduct independent and collaborative vaccine research and development projects, engaging the Swedish government, IVI's other European member countries, as well as partners from the public and private sectors across the region, including a strong partnership with the Karolinska Institute (KI).

Mr. George Bickerstaff, Chairperson of IVI's Board of Trustees, said, "We are delighted to announce the establishment of IVI's regional office in Stockholm. IVI looks forward to deepening its historic partnership with the Swedish government, KI, and other stakeholders to build another international site for global health research and innovation, advancing IVI's vision of a world free of vaccine-preventable infectious diseases."

Her Excellency Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for International Development Cooperation of Sweden, said, "Today's good news is that IVI is determined to continue to discover, develop, and deliver safe, effective, and affordable vaccines for global public health and that IVI has decided to establish an office in Europe to expand its reach, deepen its involvement on the continent, and enhance its work in Africa as part of this platform."

We are delighted and proud that Stockholm was selected by the IVI Board of Trustees as the location of this regional office. Sweden has been a member and supporter of IVI for two decades through our annual contributions and our active role on the Board of Trustees, and we have witnessed the successful contributions of IVI's work."

Dr. Jerome Kim, Director General of IVI, said, "The government of Sweden has been a pivotal

supporter of IVI since its founding, providing core and project funding through the Swedish International Cooperation Agency (Sida) to accelerate vaccine research for public health and advance global goals. From helping to develop the world's first affordable oral cholera vaccine to bolstering COVID-19 surveillance efforts in low-resource settings, Sweden's support has enabled IVI's work across the vaccine and global health spectrum and we are thrilled to enter this next phase of our partnership."

The MOU was signed between Her Excellency Matilda Ernkrans, Minister for International Development Cooperation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sweden and Dr. Kim, and a panel discussion on Sweden's past and future contributions to the vaccine industry followed, featuring Rector Ole Petter Ottersen from KI, Executive Chairman Thomas Eldered from Flerie Invest, and Secretary General Pernilla Baralt from Unicef Sweden. Chairperson Bickerstaff gave final remarks to close the signing ceremony.

Sweden was one of the first countries to sign the IVI Establishment Agreement in 1997 and started funding IVI in 2002 through Sida. Since IVI's first research collaboration with the University of Gothenburg and Swedish Biological Laboratories in 2000, Sweden has played an invaluable role in developing IVI's landmark oral cholera vaccine (OCV), Shanchol, and later, Euvichol and Euvichol Plus, vaccines developed through technology transfer from IVI and prequalified by the WHO. To date, over 56 million doses of these low-cost OCVs have been deployed worldwide through the global stockpile.

In addition, Sida continues to support a range of epidemiology and vaccine programs for cholera, typhoid, and COVID-19 control, including generating evidence for disease burden in low-resource settings across Asia and Africa, accelerating the development and introduction of affordable oral cholera and typhoid conjugate vaccines, and helping to increase capacity in developing countries to effectively implement immunization programs.

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About the International Vaccine Institute (IVI)

The International Vaccine Institute (IVI) is a nonprofit inter-governmental organization established in 1997 at the initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). IVI has 36 countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) on its treaty, including the Republic of Korea, Sweden, India, and Finland as state funders.

Our mandate is to make vaccines available and accessible for the world's most vulnerable people. We focus on infectious diseases of global health importance such as cholera, typhoid, shigella, salmonella, schistosomiasis, chikungunya, group A strep, Hepatitis A, HPV, TB, HIV, MERS, COVID-19, as well as antimicrobial resistance. For more information, please visit <https://www.ivi.int>

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