His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Partner to Immunize Children

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SEATTLE and ABU DHABI, United Arab Emirates, Jan. 26, 2011 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, announced today they are working together to provide life-saving vaccinations to children in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The partnership commits a total of $100 million – $50 million from each partner – for the purchase and delivery of vital vaccines that will save Afghan and Pakistani children and prevent disease for a lifetime.

"Like all children, the children of Afghanistan and Pakistan deserve the quality of health and opportunities that childhood immunization can provide. The personal, community, national and international benefits that will result from a generation growing up protected from preventable diseases have the potential to resonate for generations to come," said Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed.

Children in Afghanistan and Pakistan are especially vulnerable to preventable diseases, such as polio and pneumonia. Challenges in reaching them include conflict in the region, unequal health services and immunization levels among provinces within each country and, in the case of Pakistan, a slow recovery from last year's devastating floods.

"Vaccines protect children from many life-threatening childhood diseases, providing the best way to give a child a healthy start to life," said Mr. Gates. "This partnership is a powerful example of how collaboration by the global community can help build a healthier, more stable future for Afghan and Pakistani children, their families and communities."

One in four children in Afghanistan does not survive to see his or her fifth birthday, making infant and under-five mortality rates in that country among the world's highest.

Of the total funds, two-thirds will be give
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