The European Union (EU) and Rwanda Development Board (RDB) have signed a Rwf 3.6billion agreement to promote the Rwandan tourism and health sectors. This agreement will strengthen the capacity of the Rwanda Food and Drug Authority (RFDA), which is key to enhancing the attractiveness of country for investments in vaccine manufacturing.

The European Commissioner for International Partnerships, Jutta Urpilainen, noted: “I welcome the agreement today to strengthen the capacity of the Rwanda Food and Drug Authority (RFDA), which is key to enhance the attractiveness of Rwanda for investments in the manufacturing of vaccines and other pharmaceuticals, thus helping to improve access to medicines. This is an important step in supporting local manufacturing of health products in Africa. As announced by President von der Leyen, Team Europe will continue to support the country and Africa in strengthening the regulatory framework and attracting investment in the pharmaceutical sector.”

Dr Daniel Ngamije, Rwanda’s Minister of Health, said: “Upgrading Rwanda’s regulatory capabilities to the required international standards is a critical step on our journey to vaccine manufacturing. The European Union is a central partner in our efforts to bridge the gap in vaccine equity in Africa by building pharmaceutical production capacity.”

Clare Akamanzi, CEO of the Rwanda Development Board (RDB), said: “Access to vaccines is critical, especially for Africa where only around 1% of vaccines are manufactured on the continent. This agreement boosts Rwanda’s efforts to build a vaccine and pharmaceutical manufacturing ecosystem to contribute to health security of our region and our continent.”

The initiative agreed today will help the RFDA establish a strong quality control laboratory for medical products and supply new equipment for an integrated information management system. This will help the RFDA in achieving the required level of certification by the World Health Organization (WHO) to be able to fully play its role to ensure the safety, efficacy, and quality of vaccines and pharmaceutical products.

The agreement is part of a comprehensive medium-term #TeamEurope support to bring the authority’s laboratory, technical and organizational capacity to high levels of performance. As part of this effort, the EU Delegation will also seek to facilitate a peer-to-peer partnership between the RFDA and national regulatory authorities from

EU Member States.

Furthermore, the EU and the European Investment Bank are in discussions to partner with the Government of Rwanda to facilitate and promote investment by pharmaceutical and biotech companies in the country, including exploring opportunities for co-financing and de-risking potential investments.