Brazil granted full regulatory approval Friday to the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Oxford University and pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca, voicing confidence in it even as a raft of countries suspended its use.

Federal health regulator Anvisa said it saw "no health risk for the population associated with the use of this vaccine," and upgraded it from emergency to full regulatory approval.

"The benefits outweigh the risks," it said.

The decision came despite the fact that countries including Denmark, Norway, Bulgaria and Thailand have suspended use of the vaccine as a precaution after reports of recipients developing blood clots.

The European Medicines Agency said Friday severe allergies should be added to the vaccine's side effects warning.

But the World Health Organization (WHO) insisted there was no reason to stop using it, describing it as an "excellent vaccine."

AstraZeneca said there was no evidence of higher