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## U.S. GOVERNMENT HELPS COMEMMORATE WORLD TUBERCULOSIS DAY

**Tashkent, Uzbekistan, March 24, 2018** – To call attention to the impact tuberculosis (TB) has on public health in Uzbekistan, representatives from the United States Embassy joined colleagues from the Government of Uzbekistan and the World Health Organization today to commemorate World TB Day. Held around the world every year on March 24, the anniversary of Robert Koch’s discovery of the tuberculosis pathogen in 1882, World TB Day highlights the devastating health, social and economic consequences of this deadly but curable disease.



United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Country Director Gary Robbins joined representatives from the Republic of Uzbekistan Ministry of Health, the Republican Specialized Scientific and Practical Medical Center of Tuberculosis and Pulmonology (Republican Center of TB and Pulmonology), the World Health Organization (WHO), and TB healthcare providers, civil society organizations and media representatives at an awards ceremony to honor the commitment of those on the front lines of TB control and prevention.

In keeping with the World TB Day 2018 theme, “Wanted: Leaders for a TB-Free World. You Can Make History,” USAID and its national partners recognized Uzbekistan’s leaders in TB control for their outstanding contributions to improving TB care, building public awareness, and working towards social acceptance of those affected by TB. Doctors, nurses, nurse’s aides, lab technicians, outreach workers, and volunteers from across the country were presented certificates of recognition and prizes.

Uzbekistan has made great progress in TB control in recent years. TB incidence and mortality have dropped and the quality of and access to TB services have improved. Continuous efforts are underway, however, to further improve services, particularly for vulnerable population groups, and to ensure that those affected by TB are treated with dignity and respect.

“One of the most important goals in the fight against TB is social acceptance. Joint efforts are needed from government agencies, donors, doctors, nurses, and the media to ensure the public understands that with proper and timely treatment, this is a curable disease,” noted Mr. Robbin.

For 17 years, USAID has supported the Republic of Uzbekistan’s Ministry of Health in implementing the National TB Program by providing more effective and accessible TB prevention, diagnosis, and treatment for all, including vulnerable populations. The main objective of the USAID TB Control Program and Challenge TB Program is to reduce the burden of tuberculosis in Uzbekistan and prevent multidrug-resistant forms of the disease. The USAID TB programs cover a wide range of activities, including training health care workers to strengthen the health system, improving interagency coordination and cooperation, and increasing access to TB diagnosis and treatment.