

STOP TB NEWS

July 2008

TOP LINE NEWS

First HIV/TB Global Leaders' Forum held at UN Headquarters

One Life -- Two Diseases -- One Response

For the first time ever, heads of government, public health and business leaders, heads of UN agencies and activists came together on 9 June to seek a common way forward on confronting HIV/TB.

The HIV/TB Global Leaders' Forum, held at UN Headquarters, was convened by the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Stop TB, Dr Jorge Sampaio, and endorsed by the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The Forum was opened by Dr Sampaio and Mr Srgjan Kerim, President of the UN General Assembly; the UN Secretary-General; and William J. Clinton, founder of the William J. Clinton Foundation and former President of the United States. The forum was supported by UNAIDS, the World Bank, WHO, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Stop TB Partnership.

Other speakers included Faure Gnassingbe, President of Togo; Armando Guebuza, President of Mozambique; Jeannette Kagame, First Lady of Rwanda; Nafis Sadik, the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for AIDS in Asia; Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General; Dr Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS; Dr Michel Kazatchkine, Executive Director of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; Ambassador Mark Dybul, United States Global AIDS Coordinator; and Lucy Chesire and Winstone Zulu, representing Civil Society. The event was moderated by the internationally renowned journalist, Sir David Frost.

The leaders pointed to HIV/TB as a major constraint to economic development, since most TB deaths are among adults of working age. Because it most often strikes society's most disadvantaged people, they said, the dual epidemic is a barrier to social justice and human rights. They also warned that HIV/TB could evolve as a threat to global health security, particularly in the light of emergence of virtually untreatable TB strains.

Prior to the Forum, a [Call for Action](#) on HIV/TB was developed and circulated for comment. In closing the forum, Dr Sampaio urged participants to see it as a living document and stressed the need for partnership and coordination. Partnership is needed at every level, he said, to save millions of lives. Dr Sampaio reported on the outcome of the forum to the UN High-Level Meeting on AIDS, which ran from 10 to 11 June.

[Link to the HIV/TB Global Leaders' Forum web site](#)

[Link to the Note to the Media](#)

[Link to the Forum's YouTube site](#)

Stop TB Partnership's Global Drug Facility, UNITAID, WHO and FIND launch initiative to accelerate MDR-TB control

People in low-resource countries who are ill with multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) will get a faster diagnosis -- in two days, not the standard two to three months -- and appropriate treatment thanks to two new initiatives unveiled on 30 June by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Stop TB Partnership, UNITAID and the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND).

At present it is estimated that only 2% of MDR-TB cases worldwide are being diagnosed and treated appropriately, mainly because of inadequate laboratory services. The two initiatives should increase that proportion at least seven-fold over the next four years, to 15% or more.

"I am delighted that this initiative will improve both the technology needed to diagnose TB quickly, and increase the availability of drugs to treat highly resistant TB," said British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who helped launch the Stop TB Partnership's Global Plan to Stop TB in 2006 and whose government is a founding member of UNITAID. "The UK is committed to stopping TB around the world, from our funding of TB prevention programmes in poor countries, to our support of cutting edge research to develop new drugs."

The initiatives will provide new equipment and training, and in some cases new labs, to 16 countries; and MDR-TB treatment to 54 countries.

[Press release](#)

[Information about the MDR-TB initiative](#)

NEWS

Fourteenth Stop TB Coordinating Board held in Cairo

The first lady of Egypt, Mrs Suzanne Mubarak, was a speaker at the opening ceremony of the [14th Stop TB Coordinating Board Meeting](#), which coincided with the launch of a Regional Stop TB Partnership for the Eastern Mediterranean, on 6 May. In her remarks, Mrs Mubarak welcomed the initiative, which she said promised to be extremely beneficial. "I call on all people of influence and countries of the world to embrace a 'Culture of Giving' for such a noble cause - for it requires our full support and commitment," she said.

In her remarks, Irene Koek, Chair of the Board, noted that this was the first Coordinating Board held in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, and thanked Stop TB partners for their work in Egypt and the region. "The Stop TB Partnership is strongly committed to working together with Egypt and the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region to strengthen the fight against TB," she said. In the evening, the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean hosted a gala to celebrate WHO's 60th anniversary and the launch of the new regional Stop TB Partnership.

During its meeting the Coordinating Board discussed and formally adopted the findings of the Independent External Evaluation of the Stop TB Partnership completed by MicKinsey and Company. The evaluation contained a number of recommendations on the way forward for the Partnership. These recommendations, along with the Board's decisions on necessary modifications, will be posted on the Partnership's [web site](#) as soon as possible.

[Press release on the launch of the Regional Partnership](#)

[Link to the Independent External Evaluation](#)

World Medical Association to offer on-line training on MDR-TB with support from Eli Lilly and Company

In May the [World Medical Association](#) and [Eli Lilly and Company](#) announced that they will intensify their collaboration on fighting drug-resistant TB. Lilly has provided the association with a grant of \$998,773 to provide physicians with interactive online training on MDR-TB.

The purpose of this online training is to help physicians use the latest international guidelines and treatment protocols for MDR-TB care in their daily work. [Link to the press release](#)

Winstone Zulu presses for more action on TB in Canada

On a visit to Ottawa, Canada in June, Zambian TB/HIV advocate Winstone Zulu helped launch a national petition campaign with the Grandmothers for Africa Network and Members of Parliament Paul Dewar, Dr Ruby Dhalla and Nicole Demers. Zulu, who watched four of his brothers die because they lacked access to anti-TB drugs, was also the guest speaker at a roundtable on TB for Parliamentarians, which was hosted by Dr Dhalla, and in which Aeras and Results Canada were participants. Mr Zulu also met with key advisers in the offices of the Prime Minister and Minister for International Development.

Lilly workers walk to step up MDR-TB control

On 15 May at sunrise in New Zealand a group of [Eli Lilly and Company](#) employees set out on a sponsored walk aimed at raising awareness about MDR-TB and funds for two Lilly MDR-TB initiatives in India and South Africa. As the day advanced the walk, called *Transfer of Hope*, fanned out to 20 countries worldwide and included a total of 3000 participants. In China 220 Lilly employees logged 2170 kilometers in Beijing, Suzhou and Hong Kong. Lilly's offices in Italy pledged one Euro for every kilometer, and 10 employees pledged to triple their contributions if they reached a combined 100 kilometers, which they exceeded. In the United Kingdom, walkers sought additional sponsorships and donated the funds they raised to TB Alert, a local civil-society group. In Geneva, Switzerland, some 100 employees, including Jacques Tapiero, president of Lilly's Intercontinental Operations, walked four miles between WHO headquarters and the offices of the International Council of Nurses. Lilly's corporate headquarters matched the funds contributed at country level with one US dollar for every mile (1.6 kilometers) employees walked.

NEWS ON AWARDS AND GRANTS

Stop TB Partnership launches call for proposals for the second round of the Challenge Facility for Civil Society

The Stop TB Partnership's Challenge Facility for Civil Society is currently accepting proposals for its second round of grants. The Challenge Facility provides financial support to grass-roots civil society organizations engaged in advocacy and social mobilization activities seeking to raise awareness and shape policy-making for TB control at the local and national levels. Applications focusing on all aspects of TB -- multidrug-resistant TB, TB/HIV, and neglected populations, for example -- are welcome. [Who can apply](#), [How to apply](#)

Tuberculosis Survival Project announces TB advocacy award The [Tuberculosis Survival Project](#) is calling for nominations for a new award, the Tuberculosis Survival Prize, which will recognize innovation in advocacy by individuals or organizations working in the field of TB, MDR-TB and TB/HIV. Nominations will be accepted from 31 July to 19 September via a form available on the organization's [web site](#). The winner of the prize, which is supported by a grant from [Eli Lilly and Company](#), will be selected by a geographically balanced panel of patient advocates and civil society representatives chaired by [Nobel Prize Laureate Betty Williams](#). The winner will be honoured on the occasion of the [Union World Conference on Lung Health](#) in Paris in October and receive \$2000 to continue or scale up advocacy efforts. For more information, contact Paul Thorn at paulthornlondon@hotmail.com.

Stop TB Partnership's Executive Secretary is honoured by the University of California Berkeley

Dr Marcos Espinal, Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership, received the 2007 [Elise and Walter A. Haas International Award](#) from the University of California, Berkeley on 13 May. The award, conferred on Dr Espinal during Berkeley's commencement ceremony, honours an alumnus who is a native, citizen, and resident of a nation other than the United States of America, and who has a distinguished record of service to his or her country. It is one of the most prestigious honours conferred by the Berkeley campus. Dr Espinal completed his master's and doctoral degrees in public health at Berkeley.

Regional Office for the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Media Competition

The winners of a media competition on TB reporting and awareness through print/electronic and digital media in the Eastern Mediterranean Region were announced in May. A list of the winners is available at http://www.emro.who.int/STB/partnership/media_results.htm.

COUNTRY NEWS

TB control workers in Pakpattan, Pakistan find role-play is more than a game

Many studies have shown that high-quality interpersonal communications can enhance treatment success. In a workshop held at the District Health Development Centre in Pakpattan, Pakistan from 30 to 31 May, local health workers engaged in TB prevention and treatment were for the first time offered the opportunity to improve their communication skills. The workshop, which was facilitated by WHO sociologist Mr Muhammad Anwar, combined analysis of TB control in the district with sharing of experiences, role-playing exercises and feedback on the 28 participants' progress.

New toolkit aims to boost South African companies' involvement in TB control

The [Global Health Initiative of the World Economic Forum](#) and the [Lilly MDR-TB Partnership](#) have launched a new toolkit that aims to boost the involvement of South African companies in tackling the tuberculosis (TB) crisis. The toolkit comes as a response to an emerging threat of TB/HIV co-infections and drug-resistant strains of the disease in South Africa and will provide concrete guidelines to help companies rapidly increase their TB control programmes by adopting a joint approach to tackling TB and HIV and catalysing effective public-private partnerships to facilitate successful patient and programme management.

Serbia reports significant progress on TB Control

Serbia's [TB Control Programme](#) reports that the number of people becoming ill with TB disease has decreased 25% over the past five years nationally. The country cites two principal reasons for its success: providing adequate resources to health workers and targeting high-risk groups. There have been specific improvements in TB control among refugees and internally displaced people, the Roma people and prison inmates, in particular.

TB testing offered at AIDS memorial event in Luwero, Uganda

On the occasion of a candlelight memorial to honour people who have died from AIDS, held on 25 June in Wobulenzi, in the Luwero district of Uganda, AstraZeneca and the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF) set up a mobile clinic and laboratory to test for TB, HIV/AIDS and malaria and provide counseling and referral services. The [AstraZeneca-AMREF Partnership](#) focuses on strengthening health systems and integrating the management of TB, HIV and malaria programmes in Uganda, where there is a high burden of all three diseases. The Wobulenzi Town Council, the Uganda AIDS Commission and AMREF are implementing a five-year TB, HIV/AIDS and malaria project in the district.

RESEARCH NEWS

Vancouver researchers show how TB bacilli disable immune cells

Researchers at the University of British Columbia and Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute have shed light on how TB overwhelms the immune system. Powerful cells of the immune system called macrophages are designed to engulf invading bacteria and then release powerful digestive enzymes that destroy them. The researchers have discovered a substance released by the TB bacillus that targets a protein found in macrophages, thereby disrupting this process, and allowing the bacillus to hide and multiply in these immune cells. The discovery was published in May in the journal

[Cell Host and Microbe](#). The researchers hope to develop a new TB treatment that will block this mechanism.

[Link to the press release](#)

Multi-centre study seeks to prove that faster TB diagnosis will not hurt detection rates

[The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases](#) (TDR) has launched a study to determine if the number of patient visits required for a standard TB diagnosis can be reduced and the delay involved in diagnosis can be cut from three days to one. The multi-centre study will take place in Nepal, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Brazil and Yemen, in collaboration with the [Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine](#). Currently, in most countries, three sputum samples are examined over the course of two days, with a laboratory report issued on the third day. The first specimen is collected on the day a person with suspected TB first comes to the health centre. The next morning he or she collects a second specimen at home and brings it to the health centre for examination. The new approach, called a frontloading method, involves collection of two specimens and examining them on the same day. If the initial specimens are negative, the morning specimen can still be collected the next day.

A recent systematic literature review commissioned by TDR found that under the current system, the first smear identifies around 80% of smear-positive TB patients, the second a further 15% and the third an additional 2 to 5%. The TDR study aims to find out whether 95% of the smear-positive cases can be identified by examining two specimens on the same day.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS/MULTIMEDIA/WEB

Striving for a World Free of Tuberculosis

Global Health TV has produced a new film about the Stop TB Partnership, *Striving for a World Free of Tuberculosis*. The film features an interview with Executive Secretary Dr Marcos Espinal and a close-up of the vital role partnership is playing in advancing TB control in Brazil. The film was shown throughout the Geneva Health Forum in May and had a high profile at the event.

[Link to the video](#)

New document on retooling

The document "Engaging Stakeholders for Retooling TB Control", developed by the Retooling Task Force, is now available at <http://www.stopTB.org/retooling/publications.asp>. The document will be soon available in hard copy.

TBTEAM tools

The following TBTEAM tools, which are intended to facilitate access to and coordination of technical assistance, are now available on the group's [web site](#): **Stop TB Missions and Events** (including open requests for assistance) **Stop TB Experts** and **Stop TB Partner Mapping**.

TBTEAM is the TB TEchnical Assistance Mechanism of the Stop TB Partnership. It links with all technical bodies of the Stop TB Partnership including: Green Light Committee Initiative, Global Laboratory Initiative, Global Drug Facility, the TBCAP mechanism and all technical working groups of the Stop TB Partnership. TBTEAM provides a platform for coordination, encourages collaboration, promotes available expertise and facilitates planning for technical assistance according to needs.

Collaborative web site on TB infection control

A new discussion community examining TB transmission issues is now live at [GHDOnline](#). The site's objective is to allow health care implementers from various organizations to share best practices, resources and tools, and connect with other people to improve health outcomes in resource-limited

settings. GHDonline is one of the core components of the [Global Health Delivery Project](#), which is led by faculty from the [Division of Social Medicine and Health Inequalities at Brigham and Women's Hospital](#), the [Department of Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School](#), the [Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at Harvard Business School](#), the [François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights](#) and [Partners In Health](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS/HIGHLIGHTS

Union World Conference on Lung Health

The 39th Union World Conference on Lung Health will be held in Paris from 16-20 October 2008 at the Palais des Congrès, Paris. The theme this year is: *Global threats to lung health: the importance of health system responses*. [Link to the Conference web site](#)

Australasian Tuberculosis Conference

The conference, whose theme is *Tuberculosis - Think Globally, Act Locally*, will be held from 27 to 29 November at the Hilton Hotel Auckland, New Zealand. For more information, visit the [conference web site](#).

Save the Date! 2009 Stop TB Partners' Forum

The third [Partners' Forum](#), scheduled for **23–25 March 2009**, will take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Registration will begin in September.

EVENTS CALENDAR

August 2008

3-8 August	International AIDS Society Conference	Mexico City	Info
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September 2008

2-4 September	OECD High Level Ministerial Forum on Aid Effectiveness	Accra	Info
8-12 September	PAHO/AMRO Regional NTP Manager Meeting	Bogotá	
24-26 September	Clinton Global Initiative	New York	Info

October 2008

16-20 October	International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease Conference	Paris	Info
28-29 October,	15 th Meeting of the Stop TB Partnership Coordinating Board	Bagamayo, Tanzania	Info

November 2008

17-19 November	Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health	Bamako	Info
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December 2008

1-5 December	AMRO/PAHO Regional ACSM Planning Workshop	Panama City	
3-7 December	International Conference on AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections in Africa	Dakar	Info
8-10 December	Global Fund Partnership Forum	Dakar	Info