

Letter from the UK Academics and Professionals for TB

Today is World Tuberculosis Day. TB remains the world's deadliest infectious disease, affecting over 10 million people a year and killing 1.7 million – more than HIV and malaria combined. The UK continues to have one of the highest rates of TB in Europe, while increasing drug-resistance is a threat to global health security.

The UK can be congratulated on its leadership, both on the Antimicrobial Resistance agenda and for its £1 billion replenishment of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Malaria and TB, making us the world's second largest donor.

Yet current global efforts remain catastrophically insufficient. Three years ago, the world's leaders pledged to end TB by 2030 - yet at the current rate of progress, this Sustainable Development Goal will not be met for more than a century. There is a worrying shortfall in research and development spending, with no effective adult vaccine.

In September a UN High Level Meeting on TB is set to take place at the General Assembly in New York. Consistent with her vision for a Global Britain, we urge the Prime Minister to attend in person, to throw the UK's weight behind greater investment in both applied health research and product development, and to commit to more effective action with fellow leaders, so that at last this terrible disease can be beaten.

Signatories to the letter

Names with * are proposed names for in-print, all names are co-signatories for online version.

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