WHAT IS A UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING?

A United Nations High-Level Meeting (UN HLM) is convened by the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the main decision-making body of the UN representing all 193 UN Member States, and governments. Agreement to hold a dedicated UN HLM on a specialized topic is taken in exceptional circumstances through a UN resolution and vote, with the purpose of reaching agreement on cooperation measures and solutions on important global issues among Heads of State and governments. The UN HLM on TB will be the fifth time the UN has called for a high-level meeting devoted to a health issue, the first being the 2001 Special Session on HIV/AIDS, followed by UN HLMs on Non-communicable Diseases, Ebola, and Antimicrobial Resistance.

HOW WAS THE UN HLM ON TB AGREED?

Following a campaign launched by the Stop TB Partnership Board and partners in September 2016 at its Coordinating Board Meeting in New York, the resolution calling for a UN HLM on TB was tabled in December 2016 by the Global Health and Foreign Policy Initiative, a UN country grouping which includes South Africa, Thailand, Brazil, France, Norway, Senegal, and Indonesia. The resolution, and specifically the text calling for the UN HLM on TB, was agreed unanimously by UN member states through a vote in the UN General Assembly.

HOW IS THE AGENDA DECIDED?

The agenda, topics, date, and speakers will be agreed in a UN document called the ‘modalities resolution’ which will be negotiated and agreed by UN member states at UN headquarters in New York. The exact timeline for the negotiation and finalization of the modalities resolution will be agreed by UN member states. Based on previous HLMs, it will likely be finalized 6-8 months before the UN HLM on TB takes place.

WHY IS THE UN HLM ON TB IMPORTANT?

The High-Level Meeting is the biggest and best opportunity to raise the political priority of TB. It is the most significant political meeting ever held on TB. The meeting will result in a Political Declaration on TB endorsed by Heads of State that will form the basis for the future TB response.

It should secure commitment from Heads of State and government for a coordinated global response, agree to substantially increase financial resources for TB, and lead to millions of lives saved from premature deaths from TB. It should endorse measurable targets and commitments from governments and key stakeholders for 2020 and 2025 on which they can be monitored and held accountable through regular reporting.