

NOTE TO THE MEDIA

Stop TB Partnership and Kochon Foundation announce recipients of 2009 award for distinguished achievements on combating tuberculosis

4 December 2009 – Cancun, Mexico – Ms Lucy Chesire and Professor Stewart Cole will share this year's Kochon prize, which is awarded annually to persons, institutions or organizations that have made a highly significant contribution to combating tuberculosis (TB), a disease that still causes more than nine million illnesses and 1.7 million deaths each year. The selections were announced at the opening ceremony of the [World Conference of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease](#), held in Cancun, Mexico, today.

Ms Chesire is a leading international advocate who has played a critical role in spurring awareness worldwide of the dangers of TB/HIV co-infection. A nutritionist by profession, she learned she was HIV-positive in 1992 and was the first female health professional in Kenya to publicly acknowledge her status. In 2000 she was diagnosed with TB, which resulted in several surgeries and a seven-month hospital stay. She has transformed the experience of surviving TB into a passionate commitment to help achieve TB prevention and treatment for all people living with HIV, no matter who they are or where they live. She served as the first patient representative on the Stop TB Partnership Coordinating Board; and has worked closely with [RESULTS](#) as an adviser and spokesperson on a number of key advocacy initiatives in Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Professor Cole, Director of the Global Health Institute at the [Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne](#) in Switzerland, is responsible for groundbreaking research on *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, the microorganism that causes TB. In 1998 Dr Cole directed a team that determined the complete genetic sequence of *M tuberculosis* -- a piece of work that has been fundamental for the development of new drugs, diagnostics and vaccines. He also has done pioneering work on the evolution of *M tuberculosis*, the mechanisms through which it causes disease and how it becomes resistant to drugs. His team is currently leading an international project to discover new drugs to treat TB. He is the former Scientific Director of the Institute Pasteur and *Chevalier dans l'Ordre de la Légion d'Honneur* (Services to Science).

The winners will each receive the Kochon Medal and will divide the prize money, an award of US\$ 65 000. There were also [two award recipients](#) last year: Dr Jaime Bayona of Socios en Salud in Peru and Professor Emeritus Denis Mitchison, formerly of the Royal Postgraduate Medical School in Hammersmith (now Imperial College), United Kingdom.

The Kochon Foundation is a non-profit foundation registered in the Republic of Korea. The Prize was established in 2006 in honour of the late Chairman Chong-Kun Lee, founder of both the Foundation and Chong Kun Dang Pharmaceutical Corporation in Korea.

[The Stop TB Partnership](#), which is hosted by the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, consists of more than 900 international organizations, countries, donors from the public and private sectors, and nongovernmental and governmental organizations, all working together to eliminate TB.