

# STOP TB NEWS

June 2009

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## TOP LINE NEWS

### **THIRD STOP TB PARTNERS' FORUM: PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION**

Highlights and key downloads from the event

#### **Eclectic crowd gathers in Rio to renew efforts to stop TB**

More than 1300 people gathered at the Centro de Convenções SulAmérica for the opening of the Stop TB Partners' Forum on 23 March. This eclectic crowd with a common purpose came from every region of the world and included ministers from countries heavily affected by tuberculosis (TB); representatives of donor country governments, international organizations and corporations; activists, former TB patients and researchers.

[Read the press release](#)

#### **WHO global TB report shows HIV-related TB deaths higher than past estimates**

A quarter of all TB deaths—twice as many as previously estimated—were HIV-related in 2007, according to a WHO report released on 24 March at the Partners' Forum. However, the total number of new TB cases remained stable and the percentage of people becoming ill with TB continued to decline.

[Read the press release](#)

#### **Launch of Stop TB Partners social networking site**

Rio witnessed the largest gathering of Stop TB Partners to ever assemble. And the Forum was a beginning, not an end. To keep the dialogue going, the Stop TB Partnership has launched a new social networking site, [www.stoptbpartners.org](http://www.stoptbpartners.org).

#### **Stop TB Partners formulate [Rio Recommendations](#)**

Partners involved in planning and organizing key sessions and meetings at the 3rd Stop TB Partners Forum were asked to develop up to three recommendations during these sessions. These recommendations will give guidance to the Coordinating Board, Working Groups, Constituencies, Secretariat and other partnership bodies on actions required to address the concerns and priorities of Stop TB Partners for the next five years.

During the month of April 2009 partners were invited to work collaboratively on the recommendations through a wiki on [www.stoptbpartners.org](http://www.stoptbpartners.org).

Following a review by the Executive Committee of the Stop TB Partnership Coordinating Board, the Secretariat has been requested to produce a report synthesizing the Recommendations.

## **Launch of innovative photo exhibition: Images to Stop TB**

Hearts and minds were touched by [Images to Stop Tuberculosis](#), a powerful and innovative new photo exhibition that opened in Rio during the Third Stop TB Partners' Forum.

The exhibition—which aims to raise worldwide awareness of the disease—consists of images that are projected rather than printed, providing portability and the flexibility to adapt to a variety of indoor and outdoor venues. The exhibition will tour museums and public spaces in other major world cities.

### **Document downloads**

#### **Panoscope, the daily paper of the Third Stop TB Partners' Forum**

25 March 2009: [English](#)      [Portuguese](#)

24 March 2009: [English](#)      [Portuguese](#)

23 March 2009: [English](#)

#### **Statement by Ministers and leading development partners on implications of the financial crisis for tuberculosis**

[Read the statement](#)

### **Rio Communities Declaration**

In the run-up to the Third Stop TB Partners' Forum, a group of TB and TB/HIV activists came together to create a Rio Communities Declaration. The document seeks to bring to light activist priorities and catalyze action on addressing them.

[Letter of introduction to the Rio Communities Declaration](#)

[Rio Communities Declaration](#)

## **World TB Day 2009**

World TB Day, 24 March, was about celebrating the lives and stories of people affected by TB: women, men and children who have taken TB treatment; nurses; doctors; researchers; community workers—anyone who has contributed towards the global fight against TB.

Visit the [World TB Day blog](#) to see news about events around the globe, photos, posters, stories and other materials. Click on the links below to read the UN Secretary-General's Message for World TB Day.

[English](#) [Arabic](#) [Chinese](#) [French](#) [Russian](#) [Spanish](#)

### **Special Highlights**

#### **UN Foundation launches a site for direct donations to Stop TB**

Individuals committed to the global fight against TB can now make direct donations to the Stop TB Partnership's Global Drug Facility (GDF) through a UN Foundation [donation portal](#). The UN Foundation, a public charity, is an advocate for the UN and a platform for connecting people, ideas and resources to help it solve global problems. Donations will go towards the purchase of anti-TB drugs and distribution to countries by GDF.

#### **World TB Day highlighted by Google**

On 24 March Google acknowledged World TB Day on search engine home pages around the world with a link to a landing page that drove visitors to the Stop TB Partnership [web site](#).

#### **Million Youth March in the Eastern Mediterranean Region**

From Afghanistan to Somalia to Syria, schoolchildren, college and university students and other segments of society joined hands with ministries of health in March to raise their voices to say "I am stopping TB". The Million Youth March to Stop Tuberculosis united young people to show their collective will to defeat TB and express their support for the nearly one million TB patients in the Eastern Mediterranean region.

[Message from the WHO Regional Director](#)

## **Gates Foundation and Chinese Government announce \$33 million initiative to defuse "time bomb" of drug-resistant TB**

On 1 April at a [ministerial meeting on drug-resistant TB](#) in Beijing, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Chinese government announced a \$33 million project for research on diagnostics and treatments for drug-resistant TB and improving surveillance.

"Because of its skill, its scale, its TB burden, its love of innovation and its political commitment to public health, China is a perfect laboratory for large-scale testing of new tools and delivery techniques to fight TB," Gates said. The project will initially cover 20 million people and then be expanded to 100 million people over five years.

At the three-day meeting—attended by ministers and senior officials from 27 countries worst-affected by drug-resistant TB—[World Health Organization](#) (WHO) Director-General Margaret Chan warned that the global epidemic of drug-resistant TB is poised to spin out of control and urged countries to fight the growing threat.

"Call it what you may: a time-bomb or a powder keg. Any way you look at it, this is a potentially explosive situation," Chan said.

Countries attending the meeting were urged to develop national plans to prevent and control the spread of drug-resistant TB. "At a time of economic downturn, the world simply cannot afford to let a threat of this magnitude, complexity and cost spiral out of control," cautioned Dr Chan.

## **NEWS**

### **Stop TB Partnership and the Global Fund sign Memorandum of Understanding**

Dr Marcos Espinal, Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership and Dr Michel Kazatchkine, Executive Director of the [Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#) signed a memorandum of understanding in February regarding cooperation between the two organizations.

The MOU articulates specific objectives for cooperation in core activity areas, including support to Global Fund grantees by the [Global Drug Facility](#) and the [Green Light Committee](#); coordination of technical assistance through [TBTEAM](#); and monitoring and evaluation.

"Today brings a new era of even greater collaboration between the Partnership and the Global Fund. We are confident this will translate into greater opportunities for our partners all over the world whose goal is a world free of tuberculosis," Espinal said.

[Read the Memorandum of Understanding](#)

### **UNITAID approves US\$ 78 million in grants to Stop TB Partnership to address MDR-TB**

In May [UNITAID](#), an international facility for the purchase of drugs against HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB, approved fresh funding for two ongoing projects aimed at curbing multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB): the MDR-TB Scale-up Initiative and EXPAND-TB.

The MDR-TB Scale-up Initiative seeks to increase the number of patients receiving second-line drugs and to improve market dynamics for these drugs. Building on the initial UNITAID grant of US\$ 37.6 million, a new grant of US\$ 16.4 million will allow the [Global Drug Facility](#) (GDF) and the [Green Light Committee](#)—both of which are Stop TB Partnership initiatives hosted by WHO—to scale up treatment of MDR-TB in India from 2010 through 2012. India has more MDR-TB cases than any country in the world.

EXPAND-TB supplies MDR-TB diagnostics to high-burden countries. A new grant of US\$ 61.5 million follows an initial grant of US\$ 26.1 million for the project, led by the [Global Laboratory Initiative](#) (a Stop TB Partnership Working Group) in close collaboration with the [Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics](#) (FIND) and GDF. The new grant will enable an increase in countries covered, from 16 to 27. The overall objective is to jump-start strengthening of laboratories in these countries through collaboration between a variety of partners.

The project has already introduced an important breakthrough — rapid, molecular tests to diagnose MDR-TB. These tests, known as line probe assays, produce an answer in less than two days rather than the two to three months needed with other methods.

### **World Health Assembly passes resolution on prevention and control of MDR-TB and XDR-TB**

On 22 May, the World Health Assembly passed resolution WHA 62.15, "Prevention and control of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis and extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis". The Resolution agrees to strengthen measures to make access to MDR- and XDR-TB diagnosis and quality treatment universal and endorses strict quality standards for the provision of anti-TB drugs and efforts to limit their misuse.

Research for new TB diagnostics, medicines and vaccines is prioritized under the resolution through support for extra financing. At the same time, WHO will also work with Member States to develop national TB response plans that will prevent more people from getting drug-resistant tuberculosis, and diagnose and treat those who do.

[Read the Resolution](#)

### **Pacific Health Summit addresses MDR-TB**

The fifth annual [Pacific Health Summit](#) was held from 16–18 June 2009 in Seattle, USA and brought together world leaders in global health, science, industry and policy around the theme "MDR-TB: Overcoming Global Resistance".

The event followed the arc of three important international health meetings addressing TB this year: the Stop TB Partners' Forum in Rio de Janeiro in March, the [ministerial meeting on drug-resistant TB](#) in Beijing in April, and the World Health Assembly in Geneva in May.

The Summit is a year-round process. In addition to the June meeting, the Summit provides an ongoing forum for world leaders to improve health by working together to grapple with problems and solutions, share best practices and forge effective collaborations.

### **Stop TB Ambassador Luis Figo plays charity match in Geneva, launches animated cartoon**

International football icon and Stop TB Ambassador Luís Figo played a charity match—All Stars '09—in Geneva on 13 June. The match, which raised funds for children's causes, also featured current and former soccer stars and trainers including José Mourinho, Cristian Chivu, Ronaldinho, Clarence Seedorf, Fabio Capello, Giovanni Trapattoni and Giga Popescu.

At half-time, Figo ran with the ball—as the main character of an animated cartoon about tuberculosis, which premiered for an audience of nearly 12 000 spectators and satellite television viewers in 80 countries.

The film is the animated version of a comic book, [Luís Figo and the World Tuberculosis Cup](#), produced last year by the Stop TB Partnership and intended to teach children and teens about tuberculosis and how to prevent it. In the film, as in the comic book, Figo is featured as the captain of a team of teen-aged girls and boys. Together, they win a match against a squad of tuberculosis germs.

The film was shown in its French-language version at the gala match and will soon be broadcast around the world in this version and in Arabic, English, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

[Note to the Media](#)

[View the French-language version of the film](#)

### **BD and FIND announce price reduction to accelerate access to improved diagnostics**

On 17 June, global medical technology company [BD](#) (Becton, Dickinson and Company) and the [Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics](#) (FIND) announced a significant price reduction in the cost of liquid culture testing. The liquid culture test, widely used in modern research settings, provides

results far faster than traditional, solid media culture and is particularly effective for stemming the spread of multidrug-resistant and extensively drug-resistant TB in developing countries.

The price reduction—announced five months earlier than anticipated—arises from a November 2007 agreement between BD and FIND. At that time, BD agreed to reduce already below-market prices for its BD MGIT™ reagents upon the completion of 3.5 million tests, a milestone achieved in June.

[Read the press release](#)

## NEWS ON AWARDS AND GRANTS

### Call for nominations for the Kochon Prize

The [Stop TB Partnership-Kochon Prize](#) supports the global fight against tuberculosis. The Prize, consisting of a medal and US\$ 65 000, is awarded once a year to persons, institutions or organizations that have made a highly significant contribution to combating tuberculosis.

Nominations for the 2009 Kochon Prize must be submitted by 23:59 GMT + 1 on 31 July 2009.

### WHO receives prestigious international award

The World Health Organization was awarded the prestigious annual award of International Cooperation by the [Prince of Asturias Foundation](#) in Spain in May.

Prince of Asturias Foundation awards are intended to acknowledge scientific, technical, cultural, social and humanistic work carried out at an international level by individuals, institutions, groups of people or groups of institutions whose achievements are exemplary at an international level.

[Read the press release](#)

## TB PEOPLE

### South African woman whose radio diary reached millions dies from complications of HIV and MDR-TB

Thembi Ngubane, aged 24, died in early June in a South African public hospital of complications from multidrug-resistant tuberculosis. Thembi, who was living with HIV, was known to millions around the world through broadcasts of her audio diary, in which she chronicled through 50 hours of entries her experience of living with AIDS.

"Thembi thought the virus should be scared of her, rather than the other way around," writes Joe Richman—an independent American radio producer who helped her record the diary in 2006—in his [eulogy](#) to her.

She leaves behind a four-year old daughter, her partner, her mother, two sisters and a brother.

[Link to Thembi's Radio Diaries](#)

### Television star appointed Stop TB Ambassador in Jordan

Rania Ismail, an up-and-coming performer on Jordanian TV, was appointed a Stop TB Ambassador in May 2009 by that country's Ministry of Health. Ismail, a versatile artist who performs in teleplays, soap operas and other popular television vehicles, is also a qualified psychological counsellor who has been very active in social issues including women's and children's rights and reproductive and adolescent health. She has pledged to support a TB awareness drive in Jordan and the entire Arabic-speaking region through a variety of media activities.

### Pai elected co-chair for New Diagnostics Working Group

[Dr Madhukar Pai](#) was formally elected co-chair of the Stop TB Partnership's [New Diagnostics Working Group](#) (NDWG) in March, joining Dr Giorgio Roscigno of [FIND](#). As a working group co-chair he will

also serve as an ex officio member of the [Stop TB Partnership Coordinating Board](#). Pai is also the co-chair of the Evidence Synthesis for TB Diagnostics subgroup of the NDWG and serves as the [American Thoracic Society](#) representative on the NDWG.

Pai, whose research focuses on new diagnostic tools for TB, is an assistant professor of epidemiology at McGill University in Montreal, Canada and an external consultant for FIND.

### **Stop TB Partnership congratulates AR Rahman on his Oscar win**

Composer [AR Rahman](#), a long-time TB advocate, was awarded two Oscars at the [February 2009 Academy Awards](#)—one for the best music score and the other for the best song. Both were composed for the international hit movie [Slumdog Millionaire](#), which also grabbed the Oscar for best motion picture.

### **Stop TB Partnership welcomes appointment of new president of the Global Business Coalition**

John Tedstrom has been appointed President and Chief Executive Officer of the [Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#) (GBC). Tedstrom succeeded Richard Holbrooke, who had been appointed Special Representative in the US State Department earlier that month.

GBC is a non-governmental organization that consists of major for-profit corporations that bring their business capabilities and resources to the fight against HIV, TB and malaria.

Tedstrom, who joined GBC in 2006, was former director for Russian, Ukrainian and Eurasian affairs for the US National Security Council under President Bill Clinton. He worked for nearly a decade at the RAND Corporation as economist and senior economist and held the Jacyk Chair at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs in 2000-2001.

[Read the GBC press release](#)

### **Senior Scientific Adviser appointed to the Stop TB Research Movement**

Dr Christian Lienhardt has been appointed Senior Scientific Adviser to the Stop TB Research Movement. He will manage development of the movement in line with advice provided by the [Stop TB Partnership Coordinating Board](#) and [WHO Strategic and Technical Advisory Group](#), while liaising with the new tools working groups.

A graduate of the Faculté de Médecine in Strasbourg, France and the London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and a former lecturer at the London School, Dr Lienhardt most recently headed the Clinical Trial Division at the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.

### **Cricket, chess and cinema celebrities join Stop TB in India**

Cricket legend Anil Kumble, chess grandmaster and current World Chess Champion Vishwanathan Anand, and Tamil film actor Surya have lent their voices to the fight against TB.

Kumble, Anand and his wife Aruna have been enlisted by leading national NGO the [Indian Development Foundation](#) and are featured on posters with the slogans "Let's clean bowl TB" and "Let's checkmate TB". The posters have been widely distributed to reach millions of people in educational institutions, NGOs, Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, health care facilities, retail businesses, corporations, public transport, post offices, banks and the media.

And Chennai-based [REACH](#) reports that Surya, star and heartthrob of the Tamil language filmmaking industry known as Kollywood, is stopping TB by lending his image for stills, posters and pamphlets and spreading the message "Nan TB paravuvathai thadukeraen" ("I am stopping TB"). Surya has also acted in a short film on TB released in 2005 and entitled "Inaintha Kaigal" (Joined Hands).

# RECENT EVENTS/COUNTRY NEWS

## German scientists bring the public closer to TB research

The [Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research](#) in Braunschweig, Germany opened its doors to the public on 9 May, with hands-on exhibits and access to TB researchers. "We wanted to educate our visitors about tuberculosis and generate interest and enthusiasm for the work we do—especially among our local young people—and in this we were very successful," said the centre's Dr Matthias Stehr. Some 1 500 residents of this historic northern city of 250 000 people visited the centre over the course of the day.

The Helmholtz Centre, which employs some 600 staff from more than 40 countries, is engaged in basic research on TB—chiefly the study of the molecular biology of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. "We are analyzing the structure of the drug targets and antigens characteristic of the various strains of the tuberculosis bacterium. [Our] objectives are to advance the search for new and better diagnostic tools and more effective treatments for drug resistant strains," Stehr said.

## UK Parliamentarians examine progress on TB in Latin America

At a joint meeting organized by the All-Party Parliamentarian Groups and TB Alert on 12 May Dr Ernesto Jaramillo of the WHO Stop TB Department told participants that the Latin American region as a whole is expected to meet the TB targets.

But poorer countries with a high TB burden, such as Bolivia, Haiti and Guatemala will not achieve the goal without massive action. "We must look beyond the figures, in order to understand the underlying causes fuelling epidemics across the region", Dr Jaramillo said.

## Francophone Forum against TB and TB/HIV co-infection created

The Francophone Forum was created by activists from French-speaking countries in April to create an institutional framework for members to participate in the fight against TB and TB/HIV co-infection, allowing them to harmonize their ideas and actions. Representatives of ten associations signed the Forum's charter.

[Charter of Principles of the Francophone Forum Against TB and TB/HIV co-infection \(in French\)](#)

## National Stop TB Partnership launched in the Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic saw the launch of its national Stop TB Partnership on 1 April. First Lady Margarita Cedeño de Fernández, and Vice President Rafael Alburquerque were present at the launch along with Minister of Health Dr Bautista Rojas.

As part of the launch Mrs Melba Segura de Grullón, President of [Sur Futuro](#), a foundation devoted to fighting poverty, was appointed as a national Stop TB Ambassador. A Stop TB Committee was also established and includes representatives of affected community groups, the private sector, NGOs, [PAHO](#), the [Global Fund](#) and [USAID](#).

## National Stop TB Partnership launched in Syria

Syrian Health Minister Dr Maher Alhousami announced the creation of a National Partnership Programme for Combating Tuberculosis in his country in February. The new partnership is an initiative of the Syrian Ministry of Health, the Syrian Society for Combating Tuberculosis, WHO and the [Syrian Arab Red Crescent](#), among others.

The announcement took place during the third meeting of the Coordinating Board of the Eastern Mediterranean Stop TB Partnership. Other outcomes of the Board meeting included decisions to continue providing support for the creation and development of national partnerships in the Region and to organize upcoming Board meetings in countries that are already in process of initiating national

partnerships. The Board will also encourage countries to use all possible financing avenues available to initiate and run national partnerships, particularly [Global Fund](#) grant support.

### **Afghanistan Stop TB Partnership commended**

The [Afghanistan Stop TB Partnership](#), launched in November 2008, was lauded for its commitment by WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Hussein A. Gezairy at a press conference in Kabul in January.

The mission of the Afghanistan Stop TB Partnership is to ensure that every TB patient in Afghanistan has access to effective diagnosis, treatment and cure, stop transmission of TB in the country, and reduce the inequitable social and economic toll of TB. The Partnership promotes the wider implementation of the national Stop TB strategy with emphasis on advocacy, communication and social mobilization.

### **The Union opens DR Congo country office**

After several years of working in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the [International Union of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease](#) has opened a representative office in Kinshasa. The Union's goal is to strengthen its partnership with the National TB Control Programme and the Ministry of Health by building a greater day-to-day knowledge of the issues they are facing regarding tuberculosis, respiratory health and AIDS. This initiative will also help The Union and its partners to document lessons learned in the field and understand how to adapt international strategies to the Congolese context. The Union's in-country representative is [Dr Sandrine Ruppol](#).

### **Peruvian TB medical association created**

May saw the creation of the new Peruvian TB medical association, UNION PERU CONTRA LA TUBERCULOSIS. Members include pulmonologists, infectious disease specialists and laboratory biologists, including world experts in paediatric and surgical TB.

### **Thai programme enables prison leavers to continue TB medication**

An innovative pilot programme operated by [Caritas Thailand](#)'s National Catholic Migration Commission and the government of Thailand targets prisoners with TB who are released during treatment, supporting them to ensure that they complete their course of medication.

The programme is currently funded by WHO; in July the Global Fund will offer additional funding for a five-year period, enabling expansion of the programme from 30 participants in 6 prisons in Bangkok (2009) to more than 180 participants in 41 prisons throughout Thailand (2010).

Male prisoners with TB join the programme while in prison. Upon their release they are assigned a worker who sees that they become patients at an appropriate health facility and follow through on their prescribed medication regime. The programme's success rate is currently 60 percent. Participants not completing the programme have been either homeless or abused drugs; these groups will receive more intensive support.

### **TB highlighted at "African Festa" in Japan**

TB was on the agenda at the African Festa in Yokohama on 16 and 17 May 2009. An estimated 180 000 people attended the open-air event, organized by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to introduce Africa to Japanese citizens through lectures, music, and cultural events.

[Stop TB Partnership Japan](#), the [Japan Anti-Tuberculosis Association](#), the [Research Institute of Tuberculosis/JATA](#), and [RESULTS Japan](#) jointly presented their activities at the event and contributed to TB awareness raising, also addressing TB/HIV co-infection. The Stop TB Partnership Japan also distributed an information leaflet, with support from its partner [BD \(Becton, Dickinson and Company\) Japan](#).

[African Festa 2009 website \(in Japanese\)](#)

## Advocacy, communication, and social mobilization training in Cambodia

Cambodia's National Tuberculosis Programme has launched a nationwide series of advocacy, communication and social mobilization (ACSM) training workshops for international and local non-governmental organization partners, professional organizations, and provincial health department and operational district staff involved in TB control.

In preparation for the upcoming implementation of a national ACSM strategy, the two-day workshops—made possible by funding support from [USAID](#) and technical support from [PATH](#)—aim to deepen understanding of ACSM and to develop and/or strengthen basic skills that will enable the participants to design, implement, and monitor ACSM activities.

## Stopping TB in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Goma-based NGO and Stop TB partner [AGIR ENSEMBLE](#) has launched an awareness-raising campaign targeting young people (prevention, early detection) and patients (the importance of adhering to treatment). The campaign kicked off with an information session for youth on World TB Day 2009 and continued with a second session encouraging secondary students to support patients under treatment in their communities. Further sessions involving a variety of community actors (former patients, parents, church groups) are scheduled for July, September and November.

AGIR ENSEMBLE also has medical personnel involved in TB screening and treatment, including screening of people living with HIV, and hosts a group of doctors from five hospitals who meet monthly to discuss TB diagnoses.

## TB awareness on the fashion agenda in Montreal

During Montreal Fashion Week in March, attendees were introduced to more than the latest in haute couture—they found out how tuberculosis devastates the lives of women across the world. [RESULTS Canada](#) broadcast a 15-second video to raise awareness about tuberculosis on a 20 square metre outdoor screen in downtown Montreal.

The spot, which highlights TB as the number one infectious killer of women, ran 24 times a day for four days. Some 25,000 people attend fashion week, and an estimated 50,000 drivers and 20,000 pedestrians move through the neighbourhood daily.

[Action Sheet \(English\)](#)  
[Video \(English\)](#)

[Action Sheet \(French\)](#)  
[Video \(French\)](#)

# RESEARCH NEWS

## TB Alliance announces four drug discovery collaborations

In May the [Global Alliance for TB Drug Development](#) announced the signing of four new drug discovery collaboration agreements. All four projects have the potential to generate compounds active against drug-resistant tuberculosis and show promise to advance the science of TB drug development. The discovery partnerships include programmes with:

- [Anacor Pharmaceuticals](#), a biopharmaceutical company developing small-molecule therapeutics derived from its boron chemistry platform
- [Colorado State University](#) to test whether inhibition of menaquinone biosynthesis—a key component of the energy generation system in *M. tuberculosis*—has the potential to eradicate the disease *in vivo*
- [Institute of Microbiology](#) (IMCAS), a member institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, to discover and develop novel anti-TB agents from natural sources
- [New York Medical College](#) to explore the type 1 topoisomerase (Topo 1) enzyme that facilitates the unwinding of DNA.

[Read the press release](#)

## Vaccine news

The [Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation](#) and its partners announced in April the start of two new clinical trials to test the safety and efficacy of two TB vaccine candidates in infants at the [South African Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative's](#) (SATVI) field site in South Africa's Western Cape.

A Phase IIb proof-of-concept study of a promising new TB vaccine developed at the [University of Oxford](#) (MVA85A/AERAS-485) is testing it in some 2,800 young children. Researchers will also seek to obtain preliminary efficacy data for the vaccine. This is the first proof-of-concept trial of a new preventive TB vaccine in infants in more than 80 years.

A Phase I study of another TB vaccine candidate (AERAS-402/Crucell Ad35) will test its safety in 54 healthy infants previously vaccinated with BCG. Aeras and Dutch biopharmaceutical company [Crucell N.V.](#) began jointly developing the candidate in 2004, and it has since been tested for safety in healthy volunteers in the United States and South Africa and adults exposed to TB in South Africa and Kenya.

In May, Aeras inaugurated a state-of-the-art tuberculosis vaccine manufacturing facility in Rockville, Maryland that will ultimately keep the cost of future TB vaccines affordable to those who need them most. The facility, capable of producing 200 million vaccine doses, can handle powder, liquid and lyophilized (or freeze-dried) formulations of vaccines—including viral, protein and capsid vaccines—and contains new state-of-the-art equipment for lyophilization and spray drying.

In June, Aeras received a US\$ 250,000 grant from the state of Maryland to develop a nano-scale RNA nucleocapsid delivery platform for use in new TB vaccines. The RNA nanoparticle would facilitate the quick and inexpensive delivery of the vaccines and could allow for rapid response to any changes in the pathogen or for the ability to protect against co-infections.

[Press release \(Phase IIb study\)](#)

[Press release \(Phase I study\)](#)

[Press release \(new manufacturing facility\)](#)

[Press release \(grant\)](#)

## Antigen discoveries could lead to rapid, reliable TB test

New antigens have been identified that might pave the way for a reliable tuberculosis rapid blood test, according to an article published in *Clinical and Vaccine Immunology* in February 2009.

So far, rapid tests have failed to perform as well as traditional sputum-smear microscopy in detecting TB. The search for a rapid test has been intensive, because smear microscopy is time-consuming, labour-intensive and inconvenient for patients because of the need for repeated specimen collection.

Following systematic reviews of commercially available serological TB tests, [TDR](#) (a Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases) in collaboration with [McGill University](#) (Montreal) and the [University of California \(San Francisco\)](#) systematically reviewed the performance of purified antigens for serodiagnosis of tuberculosis.

Promising antigens, or combinations of antigens, were identified that could lead to development of a reliable rapid blood test. While researchers are unsure whether the antigens will surpass smear microscopy as the most effective form of detection, use of an antigen-based blood test in combination with smear microscopy could speed up diagnosis and/or make it more accurate.

Test kits based on the antigens identified are being developed; TDR will work with test developers and manufacturers to facilitate rapid lab-based and clinical evaluations of these new products.

[Read the article](#)

Contact: [Andrew Ramsay](#), TDR

# RECENT PUBLICATIONS/MULTIMEDIA/WEB

## Public service announcement: Figo observes a moment of silence for TB victims

By tradition, on playing fields across the world, soccer teams stand silently for a moment to honour fallen team-mates or acknowledge the passing of football heroes. In a short film released in February 2009 by the Stop TB Partnership, international soccer star and Stop TB Ambassador Luís Figo observes a moment of silence for the nearly 5 000 people who die each day of tuberculosis.

The film, which was produced by [Fabrica](#), the Benetton Group communications research centre, has been aired as a public service announcement on television networks and news and entertainment websites across the world.

[View the public service announcement](#)

## New TB advocacy toolkit available

March 2009 marked the launch of the [TB Advocacy Toolkit](#)—a one-stop location housing publications and tools relating to tuberculosis control and advocacy.

The dynamic online content management system is the first of its kind to organize valuable information resources from multiple authors in one, easy-to-access location. Designed with users in mind, the Toolkit enables visitors to research, develop and actually publish customized materials that support advocacy goals with a click of a mouse.

Funded by [TBCTA](#) and [USAID](#), and created in partnership with the [American Thoracic Society](#) and [Edelman](#) public relations, the **TB Advocacy Toolkit** is revolutionizing the way global health materials about TB are produced, distributed and received.

Its features include:

- A **“Favorites” function** for saving content that’s useful for advocacy efforts
- A **site structure organized by relevant topics**, such as “ACSM” and “Budgeting,” that allows users to browse sections of TBCTA partner resources
- Concise **executive summaries** of resources for quick and easy reference
- **User-friendly templates** for press releases, fact sheets and media advisories
- A Google-like **“search” function** that sorts through publications, sections and tools
- A **ratings function** for users to rank material based on utility and effectiveness.

## Documentary on TB in the US a wake-up call for many

A documentary film, *On the Lake—Life and Love in a Distant Place*, by David Bettencourt and G. Wayne Miller, is reminding people across the United States that tuberculosis was the number-one killer in their country in the not so distant past.

The one-hour documentary, produced by Stop TB partner [Eagle Peak Media](#), chronicles the lives, loves and losses of Rhode Islanders who were confined to a lakeside TB sanatorium in the first half of the 20th century, when no effective TB treatment was available. The film paints a powerful portrait of the stigma attached to TB, and the terror the disease inspired across the United States, in the pre-antibiotic era. The documentary closes with a hard look at the global TB epidemic today.

*On the Lake* was broadcast widely on affiliates of the [Public Broadcasting Service](#) in cities around the US beginning in March 2009 and will continue to appear through this spring and summer.

[More information](#) about the film and its broadcast schedule

## New TB textbook: Tuberculosis—A Comprehensive Clinical Reference

A new textbook edited by Professor Simon Schaaf, MMed, MD (Stellenbosch) of the University of Stellenbosch (South Africa) and Professor Alimuddin I. Zumla, PhD (Lond), FRCP (Lond) of University College London Medical School (UK) has been published by WB Saunders Elsevier Ltd, London, and is now available for purchase.

The textbook, featuring a foreword by Reverend Archbishop Desmond Tutu, is available in two editions:

<b>Hardback edition</b>	ISBN: 978-1-4160-3988-4	Price: £99 / €142	<a href="#">To order</a>
<b>International Edition</b>	ISBN: 078-81-312-2151-9	Price: £35 / €49	<a href="#">To order</a>

### **Tuberculosis and Public Health: Policy and principles in tuberculosis control**

The historical background and scientific basis of the national tuberculosis programme as a model for TB control are explored in a new book published in May 2009 by the [International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease](#).

*Tuberculosis and Public Health: Policy and principles in tuberculosis control* by Dr Thuridur Arnadottir was inspired by the policy model developed in national programmes, as well as by countless debates with lay people and health professionals both within and outside tuberculosis programmes. It aims to share experiences and thoughts that concern tuberculosis work in high-prevalence countries.

Thuridur Arnadottir trained in medicine in Iceland, in tropical medicine at the University of Copenhagen, and in public health at the Harvard School of Public Health.

*Tuberculosis and Public Health* is available both as a book and a CD-ROM.

<b>Book</b>	Price: US\$ 80 / €60	<a href="#">To order</a>
<b>CD-ROM</b>	Price: US\$ 30 / €20	<a href="#">To order</a>

### **Report examines funding for the TB/HIV co-epidemic**

In March 2009, [ACTION](#) released a report stating that donor-funded AIDS initiatives are failing to address staggering TB/HIV co-infection levels. [Living with HIV, Dying of TB: A Critique of the Response of Global AIDS Donors to the Co-epidemic](#) says that in some cases, institutions lack the means to even monitor whether funding was provided for TB/HIV efforts, let alone the efficacy of such investments.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS/HIGHLIGHTS**

### **International Meeting on HIV/TB Research and Networking**

[WHO](#) and the [TB/HIV Working Group](#) of the Stop TB Partnership in collaboration with the [International AIDS Society](#), the Consortium to Respond Effectively to the AIDS/TB Epidemic ([CREATE](#)), [Treatment Action Group](#) and the [Desmond Tutu HIV Centre](#) are organizing a high-profile meeting on HIV/TB research issues. The meeting will be held on 18 July 2009 (afternoon) and 19 July 2009 (morning), in Cape Town, South Africa, immediately prior to the upcoming 5th [IAS Conference on HIV pathogenesis, treatment and prevention](#).

The meeting will bring together notable researchers and leaders in the areas of TB prevention, childhood TB/HIV, TB treatment and diagnosis, and the interaction between HIV and drug resistant TB. It is intended to create a forum to exchange ongoing research activities (including data) among researchers, and inform the revision of WHO HIV/TB research priorities.

For more information, please contact Ms Rosalie Edma at: [edmar@who.int](mailto:edmar@who.int), mentioning "HIV/TB research meeting" in the subject line.

### **Courses Offered by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease**

The Union's **technical courses** cover the practical and theoretical aspects of tuberculosis prevention, treatment, and control. Upcoming courses include:

#### **VII Spanish International Course on Clinical Management of Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis**

20 –24 July in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

#### **II English International Course on Clinical Management of Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis**

21 –25 September in Manila, The Philippines

[Click here](#) for details and application information for the above courses.

### **Clinical and Programmatic Management of MDR- and XDR-TB**

21 –25 September in Beijing, China

(in conjunction with the 2nd Conference of the Union Asia Pacific Region)

[Click here](#) for details

The Union's **International Management Development Programme** trains leaders in public health to anticipate and effectively cope with the challenges of operating programmes in the dynamic and constantly changing world of public health. Upcoming courses include:

#### **Planning and Project Management for TB Control**

September 1–12 in Bangkok, Thailand

Improve your TB programme's cash flow by learning the essentials of budget management. This course provides participants with advanced training in budget development processes specific to TB organisations, while learning to conduct accurate and clear financial reporting, as well as techniques on how to monitor funds throughout the duration of a project.

#### **Human Resources Development and Management for TB Control**

November 2–14 in Bangkok, Thailand

Create a work environment within your TB organisation that motivates personnel to higher levels of achievement. This course introduces participants to various human resources strategies and methods that can increase productivity by boosting morale, create a more cohesive work environment, and demonstrate how a system of rewards can motivate personnel to higher results, all within the context of running a national TB programme.

For more information [click here](#) or contact Jayson Miller, [jmiller@theunion.org](mailto:jmiller@theunion.org).

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### July 2009

6 - 9 July	United Nations Economic and Social Council	Geneva	<a href="#">Info</a>
8-10 July	G8 Summit	L'Aquila (Italy)	<a href="#">Info</a>
19-22 July	International AIDS Society Pathogenesis Conference	Cape Town	<a href="#">Info</a>

### September 2009

6-10 September	6th European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International Health	Verona	<a href="#">Info</a>
9-12 September	International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease Asia-Pacific Region Conference	Beijing	<a href="#">Info</a>
22-25 September	Clinton Global Initiative	New York	<a href="#">Info</a>

### October 2009

26-30 October	7 <sup>th</sup> Global Health Promotion Conference	Nairobi	<a href="#">Info</a>
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### December 2009

3-7 December	International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease 40th World Conference on Lung Health	Cancun	<a href="#">Info</a>
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