**TEMPLATE ADVOCACY LETTER FOR DECISION-MAKERS**

The below template advocacy letter may be adapted and contextualized to the national level, as appropriate. The advocacy asks, highlighted in yellow, will vary depending on whether the country is affected by TB and if it is a donor country.

The letter may be adapted and issued to decision-makers in government, parliament, National TB Programs, Ministries of Health, Education, Foreign Affairs, or Development, or local authorities, as appropriate.

Ideally, in countries affected by TB, a paragraph on the specific country context could be added to highlight the relevance of the issue for the decision-maker.

The letter may be shared together with copies of [*A Deadly Divide: TB Commitments vs TB Realities*](http://www.stoptb.org/communities/divide.asp) and [*Step Up for TB 2020*](http://www.stoptb.org/suft/), with the corresponding regional and country factsheets, where relevant.

[DATE]

**Re: Invitation to support the global campaign for World TB Day, 24 March 2021.**

Your Excellency,

On behalf of [Organization], I am writing to thank you for your leadership on matters of public health, particularly in these challenging times, and to invite you and your government to join the global campaign for World TB Day on 24 March.

We would be grateful if you could support our campaign by releasing a message on World TB Day to remind the world that we are losing time in the fight to end this deadly disease.

In 2021, despite being both preventable and curable, tuberculosis (TB) remains one of the world’s deadliest infectious diseases, causing 1.4 million deaths every year. World leaders have until next year, December 2022, to implement the United Nations Political Declaration on Tuberculosis. This is a milestone moment in the 2030 Agenda; failure to fulfil the targets and commitments will seriously threaten the target to end the TB epidemic by 2030.

Time is passing quickly, and we are at risk of running out the clock, as documented in recent reports by the [UN Secretary-General](https://mailchi.mp/who/un-secretary-general-outlines-priority-recommendations?e=a4ec9705bc), the [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int/tb/publications/global_report/en/), and [TB communities and civil society](http://www.stoptb.org/communities/divide.asp). For example, despite the global commitment to spend $15 billion every year, the annual expenditure on TB still stands at less than half of that amount.

Meanwhile, COVID-19 has slowed progress and reversed our global gains by between 5 and 12 years, according to a modeling by the Stop TB Partnership, while also disproportionately impacting those in society who are already most vulnerable and creating additional barriers to access. Smart national recovery plans that simultaneously address TB and COVID, as two airborne infectious diseases, must be rapidly implemented.

Another recent report by the Stop TB Partnership and Médecins Sans Frontières, [*Step Up for TB 2020*](http://www.stoptb.org/suft/)*,* found that 37 countries with a high burden of TB are using outdated policies and practice for TB prevention, treatment, and care.

That is why our theme for World TB Day 2021 is [**The Clock is Ticking**](http://www.stoptb.org/events/world_tb_day/2021/join.asp#CCall), highlighting the urgency with which the international community must redouble its efforts to fulfil their commitments. The entire TB community is calling for urgent action and investment to get back on track and accelerate our collective efforts to fulfil the 2022 UN targets on TB.

This World TB Day, I wish to encourage you to support the campaign in one or more of the following ways:

* Issuing a public statement reaffirming your commitment to implementing the UN Political Declaration on TB by December 2022, outlining your progress and next steps, and expressing support for the UN Secretary-General’s proposal to hold a follow-up High-Level Meeting on TB in 2023;
* Lighting up a landmark, building, or clock in **RED** on 24 March 2021 to bring attention to the fight against TB, sharing images and messages on social media to support and amplify the global World TB Day campaign;
* Arranging a meeting with your National TB Program to plan and implement strengthened, integrated TB and COVID-19 mitigation and response measures;
* Committing to review, update, and implement your TB policies by the end of 2022 to align with the latest WHO and internationally recognized guidelines and participate in the next Step Up for TB survey on TB policies;
* Increasing financing for TB prevention and care, innovations in care delivery, and research and development, including for new TB vaccines to prevent the development of TB disease.

Please do not hesitate to reach out in case we can provide support.

Yours sincerely,