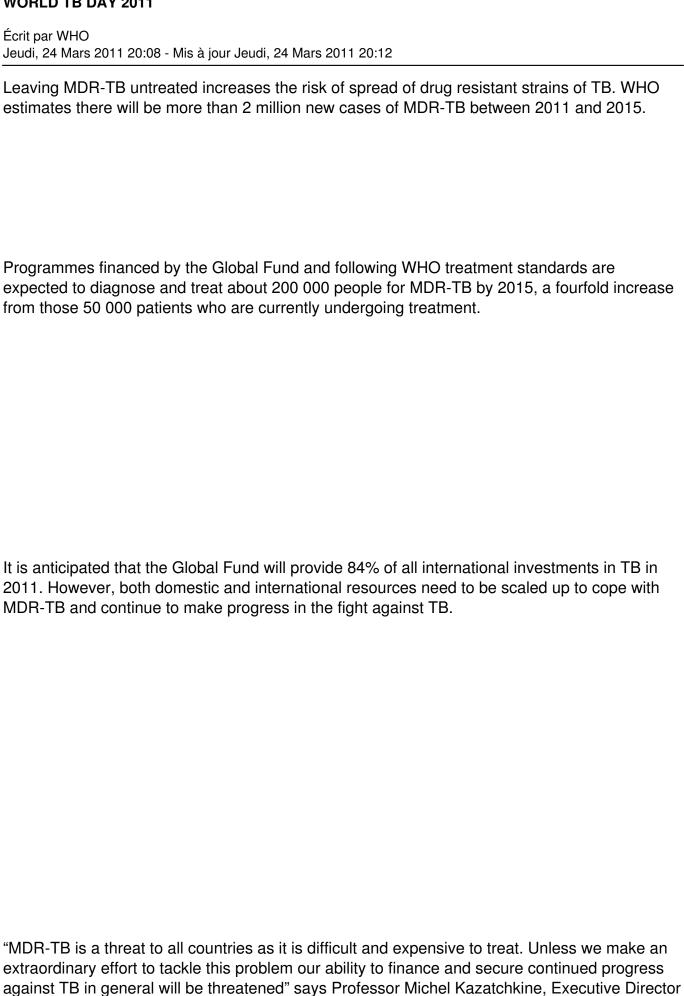
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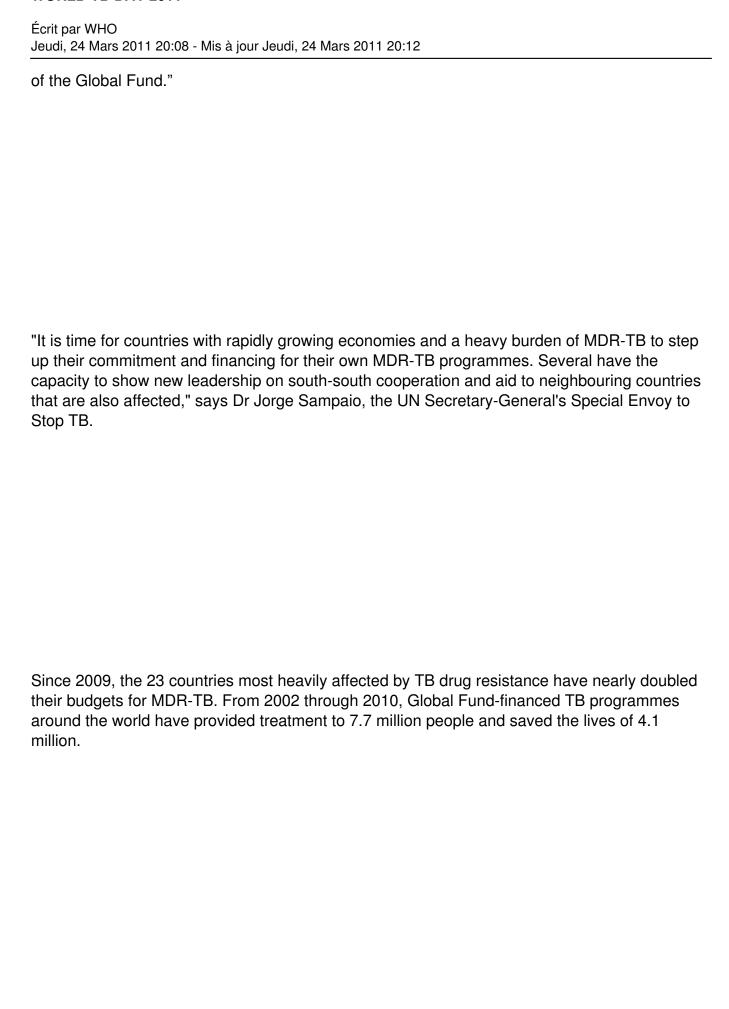


Partners call for increased commitment to tackle MDR-TB

23 March 2011 - Geneva - On World TB Day, the World Health Organization (WHO) the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Stop TB Partnership are calling on world leaders to step up their commitment and contributions to meet the goal of diagnosing and treating one million people with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) between 2011 and 2015.

Today WHO has released a report, Towards Universal Access to Diagnosis and Treatment of MDR-TB and XDR-TB by
2015, which presents progress in the MDR-TB response in the countries with the highest burden of drug-resistant TB. "Many countries have made progress, but despite the recent scale up in efforts, the world needs to do much more to get care to all MDR-TB patients who need it," says Dr Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General. "We cannot allow MDR-TB to spread unchecked."





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"The Global Fund's success can be measured in the number of lives that have been saved through care provided by the TB programmes it finances," says Dr Lucica Ditiu, Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership. "Every TB patient should have access to proper care. We advocate on behalf of millions of patients worldwide and our strong partners such as WHO and the Global Fund. To reach a million people with effective care for MDR-TB over the next five years, we will need to work closely with all partners, especially with affected communities."

MDR-TB is a form of TB that fails to respond to standard first-line drugs.

In 2009, WHO reported that 9.4 million people became ill with TB and 1.7 million died, including 380 000 people with HIV-associated TB. There were some 440 000 cases of MDR-TB and 150 000 deaths in 2008, the latest year for which estimates are available.

About the World Health Organization (WHO)

WHO is the directing and coordinating authority for health within the United Nations system. It is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research

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agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support

to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends.

The WHO Stop TB Department together with WHO regional and country offices: develops policies, strategies and standards; supports the efforts of WHO Member States; measures progress towards

TB targets and assesses national programme performance, financing and impact; promotes research; and facilitates partnerships, advocacy and communication

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About The Global Fund

The Global Fund is a unique global public/private partnership dedicated to attracting and disbursing additional resources to prevent and treat HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. This partnership between governments, civil society, the private sector and affected communities represents a new approach to international health financing. The Global Fund works in close collaboration with other bilateral and multilateral organizations to supplement existing efforts dealing with the three diseases.

Since its creation in 2002, the Global Fund has become the major financier of programmes to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, with approved funding of US\$ 21.7 billion. To date, programs supported by the Global Fund have saved 6.5 million lives through providing AIDS treatment for 3 million people, anti-tuberculosis treatment for 7.7 million people and the distribution of 160 million insecticide-treated nets for the prevention of malaria.

About the Stop TB Partnership

The Stop TB Partnership, which is hosted by the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, consists of more than 1 600 international organizations, countries, donors from the public and private sectors, and nongovernmental and governmental organizations, all working

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together to eliminate TB. The Partnership's Global Plan to Stop TB 2011-2015, a roadmap for reducing the toll of TB worldwide and for TB research and development, aims to halve TB deaths compared to 1990 levels by end 2015.

Additional link: The Report can be found at: http://webitpreview.who.int/entity/tb/en/index.html