

JOINT RIGA DECLARATION ON TUBERCULOSIS AND ITS MULTI DRUG RESISTANCE

30 – 31 March 2015, Riga, Latvia

Participants of the Eastern Partnership Ministerial Conference on Tuberculosis and Its Multidrug Resistance, comprising the ministers and high level representatives from the ministries responsible for health of the EU Member States and Partner countries of the Eastern Partnership,

NOTING that tuberculosis (TB) is not only a public health challenge, but also a far-reaching social, economic, political, and security threat having substantial cross-linkages in terms of co-morbidities with other conditions, particularly HIV/AIDS,

NOTING that TB elimination is not achievable without addressing the global nature of the TB epidemic and thus the need for global investment and collaboration,

CONSIDERING the several key policy and strategy documents which support and guide TB prevention and care, including the World Health Organization's (WHO) End TB Strategy which will replace and build on the Stop TB Strategy in 2015, the Global Plan to Stop TB 2016 – 2020, the WHO European Region Consolidated Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Multidrug- and Extensively Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis in the WHO European Region, 2011-2015, the Tuberculosis Action Plan for the WHO European Region, 2016-2020, the ECDC Framework Action Plan to Fight Tuberculosis in the European Union, 2008, and the Berlin Declaration on Tuberculosis 2007,

CONSIDERING that the WHO European Region accounts for almost a quarter of the MDR-TB global burden and that rates in many countries of the European Region are alarming,

RECOGNISING that TB and MDR-TB are also a cross-border health threat in the globalised world where overall the mobility of the population is increasing,

RECOGNIZING that various national policies and practices leave room for significant improvements in addressing programmatic gaps of TB prevention and care in the countries participating in the Conference,

RECOGNISING that targeted prevention strategies are the most effective tool to control the spread of TB and that efficient TB prevention and care require innovative and holistic health and social approaches and strategies to be sustainable, which include the recognition of specific patient's needs, personalisation of medical treatment and specifically educated medical professionals open to cooperation with the patients,

RECOGNIZING that due to generally growing national income levels and changes in qualification for eligibility from Global Fund financing, access to international financial support available for TB programs in the European Region is rapidly declining,

RECOGNIZING the need to scale up investment in TB research and innovation for new tools and approaches to fight TB and M/DR-TB to take into account cost-effectiveness,



Herewith have agreed on the following:

- (1) To implement the End TB Strategy and to do the utmost to reach a 75% reduction in the number of TB deaths and a 50% reduction in TB incidence rate by 2025 compared with 2015 thus progressing towards ending TB as a public health problem in the countries participating in the Conference through implementing sustainable response measures integrated within health systems and involving all relevant stakeholders, and supporting TB prevention and control globally.
- (2) To call the upcoming Eastern Partnership summit in May 2015 in Riga to endorse this aspiration.
- (3) To target and increase domestic funding as needed, towards more patient-centred care on ambulatory level as a way to avoid hospital-based transmission of the disease and ensure appropriate patient education interventions, especially for socially vulnerable groups.
- (4) To strengthen the work with vulnerable populations, where social support is essential, by ensuring multisectoral collaboration, including civil society and affected populations in the design, implementation and monitoring of national TB response as well as service delivery.
- (5) To cooperate in cross-border risk assessment measures regarding the spread of tuberculosis and continuity of care for patients in the region through, but not limited to, bilateral mechanisms among the countries and joint actions.
- (6) To strengthen and formalize regional collaboration on TB and MDR-TB at the highest political level across the different sectors, including civil society organizations and communities.
- (7) To strengthen collaboration in research and development for new tools and embrace innovative and patient-centred approaches to TB prevention and care.
- (8) To ensure adequate domestic resources are made available in order to sustain investments in TB, particularly in countries transitioning from donor funded activities.
- (9) To commit ourselves to closely monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the actions outlined in this Declaration.
- (10) Welcoming the proven value of the first Eastern Partnership Ministerial Conference on Tuberculosis and its Multi-Drug Resistance as a forum for deeper political reflection on the thematic dimension of cooperation within the Eastern Partnership, the Participants have undertaken to meet regularly to review the progress against the actions outlined above and discuss additional measures that would be needed.