

The Barcelona Declaration

We, the undersigned, as political representatives of various peoples of the world, recognising that every man, woman and child should be able to live their lives free from the tyranny of disease, HEREBY DECLARE:

1. That tuberculosis (TB) has killed a greater number of people than any other infectious disease in human history and continues to be responsible for 1.5 million deaths a year, often affecting the most vulnerable, and that it should be a global political priority.
2. That the current rate of progress in combatting TB is too slow, such that the disease will remain a threat to the social and economic wellbeing of millions of citizens around the world for centuries to come, and that accelerating progress against the disease should be recognised by all governments to be in the interests of all.
3. That drug-resistant TB demonstrates a collective failure to address the disease properly, imposing an often unbearable burden of treatment on patients and threatening to set back progress against the disease at the grave cost of millions of lives, and that it should be the focus for urgent action.
4. That the current drugs for TB treatment are inadequate, that vaccines and diagnostics are insufficient, and that the commercial market for pharmaceutical development has failed TB patients.
5. That TB imposes on patients a triple burden, combining the devastating health impact of the disease itself, the harsh burden of treatment, and the isolation of social exclusion driven by stigma and fear, and that these problems should be addressed holistically by national health programmes.
6. That TB co-infections such as HIV and diabetes compound the challenges faced by patients during treatment, hindering efforts to reduce rates of disease and increasing the mortality and morbidity associated with TB, and that healthcare systems should integrate programmes for key co-infections.

We therefore commit to use all the means at our disposal to urge sustained action from our governments, to secure the necessary international and domestic resources to combat TB, and to press for the prioritisation of the disease on political agendas, specifically:

7. To demand that every patient, regardless of who they are, where they live, or their ability to pay, shall have access to quick, accurate diagnosis and high quality treatment, and that TB diagnosis and treatment never result in the impoverishment of patients or their families.
8. To call for a model of research and development that is driven by public health need and will support and enhance existing pipelines of desperately needed new drugs, diagnostics and vaccines, to ensure that new treatments are accessible and affordable for the patients who need them.
9. To insist that patients and vulnerable groups are placed at the heart of the response to the disease, supporting the engagement of communities and civil society groups in every aspect of TB prevention, detection, and treatment, puncturing stigma and giving patients a stronger voice in the response to the epidemic.

And to this effect WE HEREBY AGREE to establish a new global parliamentary caucus to press for a more effective response to the TB epidemic, working with official organisations including the World Health Organisation, UNITAID, the Global Fund, the Stop TB Partnership, the Union and UNAIDS, and with non-governmental organisations across the world, reaching across political and geographical divides and seeking to build commitment in our own countries and beyond, to secure an end to the TB epidemic within a generation.