

THE UNION NORTH AMERICA REGION IN 2018



CREDIT: Courtesy of the United Nations

ADVOCATING FOR ACTION AT THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL MEETINGS IN NEW YORK

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*Maria Fernanda Espinosa, President
of the seventy-third session of the General
Assembly, speaks at the UN HLM on TB.*

The Union called for meaningful and committed global action to come out of the United Nations High-Level Meeting (HLM) on Ending Tuberculosis (TB) and the UN HLM on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) that took place in New York, USA, this year.

The first-ever UN HLM on Ending TB produced a historic Political Declaration, with specific, measurable milestones to achieve by 2022. By adopting this declaration, national leaders have said they recognise TB as a challenge they are essential to solving. They have committed to taking specific actions. The Union called on all leaders to recognise that the day to begin implementing this new agenda is now.

President of The Union, Dr Jeremiah Chakaya Muhwa, spoke on a multi-stakeholder panel at the HLM on TB and made three proposals for change. First, to revolutionise prevention. Second, to increase demand for TB services, starting with household TB contacts, where every person has the right to know their TB status. Finally, he asked to create the space for engaging new partners through TB Prevention Month.

At the HLM on NCDs, The Union united with nearly 300 civil society organisations in a statement calling on world leaders to go above and beyond the vague and unambitious commitments contained in the Political Declaration of the third HLM on NCDs, which was adopted at the meeting.

The statement, issued by the NCD Alliance, of which The Union is a member, commended Heads of State and governments for embracing the opportunity the HLM presented to celebrate initiatives and progress, but stated that past actions will be insufficient to drive future change. The statement asserted that decisive new action is urgently needed to halt the tsunami effect of NCDs — on people, families, communities, and economies.

FROM EVIDENCE TO PUBLIC HEALTH ACTION

For nearly 100 years The Union has drawn together the best scientific evidence and expertise to address the most pressing public health challenges affecting people living in poverty around the world. Know. Share. Act.

KNOW

- The Union has continued to widely share preliminary results from Stage 1 of the STREAM clinical trial with key stakeholders including international health organisations and, most importantly, with communities who took part in the trial.
- South Africa's Empilweni Tuberculosis Hospital, in the Eastern Cape, enrolled its first patient with multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) in Stage 2 of the STREAM clinical trial in May 2018. This is the first time that the hospital has participated in a clinical trial, an important milestone for both the hospital and the community, which will benefit from much needed capacity building for clinical trial research.
- The Union, with MSF Canada, was featured in a report from the Canadian Standing Committee on Health, 'A Study on the Status of Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in Canada and Related Recommendations'. The report emphasises the importance of TB within the AMR debate.

SHARE

- The 22nd Annual Conference of The Union North America Region, held in Chicago, brought together TB advocates, survivors, scientists, clinicians and programme managers from across the Western Hemisphere to learn about and share the latest research in TB prevention and treatment.
- In July 2018, the TREAT TB project — a USAID-supported project implemented by The Union and Vital Strategies — launched a webinar series focusing on capacity building to conduct high quality clinical trials in countries where MDR-TB is prevalent.
- Marianne Gaye-Ayrault, Global Training and Education Director, was invited to speak at the opening ceremony of the IMPACT Symposium organised by the CDC's Division of Global Health, in the USA, where she spoke about the importance of human capacity building in tackling global health challenges.
- Union Courses organised a two-day simulation exercise for graduating fellows from Kenya and Bangladesh at the CDC headquarters in Atlanta, USA, putting into practice a variety of Improving Public Health Management for Action (IMPACT) competencies.

ACT

- More than 40 parliamentarians from the Global TB Caucus, of which The Union is a founding member, met in New York where they called on world leaders to attend the first United Nations High-Level Meeting on TB and to make meaningful commitments to address the disease.
- The Union was proud to support World TB Survivor Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill in the USA, which enables survivors of TB to meet with Congressional offices in Washington and tell their personal stories of living with — and surviving — the disease.
- José Luis Castro, Executive Director of The Union, joined an expert panel to discuss the development of innovative interventions for TB prevention and care, tailored to TB control in New York City. The panel, 'Bending the Curve — Ending TB in NYC', was the plenary session at 'The Tuberculosis Summit: Moving towards a TB-free NYC'.

