



NEWS RELEASE

Figo's new goal is fighting tuberculosis in his role as a Stop TB Ambassador

The international football icon seeks to reach people around the world with messages about how to stop tuberculosis

24 January 2008 - Geneva/Milan -- The Stop TB Partnership* today announced the appointment of Luis Figo* as a Stop TB Ambassador. Figo, a football star beloved around the world, will capitalize on his fame and popularity to raise awareness about tuberculosis (TB) and the need to fight this disease, which takes the lives of 4400 people every day.

"Tuberculosis is one of the unfairest fouls in the game of life," Figo said on the occasion of the announcement. "I am grateful to the Stop TB Partnership for giving me the opportunity to help protect the world's people against this terrible illness."

TB is an airborne infectious disease that is preventable and curable. People ill with TB bacteria in their lungs can infect others when they cough. In 2005, 8.8 million people fell ill with TB and 1.6 million died. If TB disease is detected early and fully treated, people affected by the disease cease to be able to infect others and can be cured.

On the occasion of Figo's appointment, the Stop TB Partnership launched a competition for the design of an educational comic book featuring Figo as the main character. The project's aim is to entertain children and young adults while educating them about TB. "We are grateful to Luis Figo for running with the ball on this initiative, which can save many lives if young people take the messages in the comic book to heart and share them with their elders" said Dr Marcos Espinal, Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership.

Submissions for the competition, which are due on 10 April 2008, are to consist of the design of a comic book, using a script provided by the Stop TB Partnership. The winner of the competition, which is open to anyone over the age of 18, will be awarded a US\$ 5000 cash prize. The comic book will be published by the Stop TB Partnership for worldwide distribution and exhibited at the International Festival of Amadora, 24 October - 9 November 2008; and the Festival International de la Bande Dessinée 2009 (Angoulême).

Figo also will lend his image and broadcast personal messages about fighting TB for an upcoming poster campaign, to be launched in March.

***Note to Editors**

Figo, a professional footballer from Portugal, was the 2000 European Footballer of the Year and the 2001 FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) World Player of the Year and was named among the FIFA 100. He plays as a midfielder and winger, currently for [Internazionale](#) in Milan, Italy.

The Stop TB Partnership (www.stoptb.org), which is hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland, is a network of more than 600 organizations, countries, patient groups, donors from the public and private sectors, and nongovernmental and governmental organizations working together to eliminate TB.

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For more information about tuberculosis, visit www.stoptb.org

Rules for the competition and entry forms are available at: www.stoptb.org/figo