



Media Release

For immediate release

NEW PARTNERSHIP TO COMBAT DRUG-RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS

3 December 2009 (Cancun, Mexico) - The Stop TB Partnership and the Lilly MDR-TB Partnership today announced their US\$1.4 million collaboration to battle the increasing incidence of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) across the globe.

The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership grant covers the Stop TB Partnership's work in a number of global prevention and awareness activities, many of which have already begun. These include the Stop TB Ambassadors initiative, which recruits well-known celebrities to engage the general public on TB; and two international media awards, one for excellence in reporting on TB, and the second for outstanding photographic images of communities affected by TB. The grant also facilitates support at the grass roots level by providing a number of small civil society organizations with financial support.

"This collaboration with the Stop TB Partnership allows us to extend our awareness and prevention messages in a number of creative and effective ways. Through this initiative and additional activities which form part of the Lilly MDR-TB Partnership's multi-pronged approach, we are able to make a significant contribution to changing the lives of the millions of people affected by TB and MDR-TB across the globe," said Patrizia Carlevaro, Head of the International Aid Unit for Eli Lilly and Company.

"The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership shares our dedication to promoting global commitment to TB control -- which is the best prevention for development and spread of MDR-TB. We are grateful for their investment in our initiatives to raise awareness about TB through our ambassadors' program, our photo and journalism awards and our assistance to grassroots civil society," said Dr Marcos Espinal, Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership.

TB is an airborne infectious disease, which is preventable and curable. The disease can be spread when people who are ill with TB bacteria in their lungs cough and expel the bacteria into the air. Globally in 2005, 8.8 million people fell ill with TB and 1.6 million people died from the disease. If TB is detected early and fully treated, people with the disease quickly become non-infectious and eventually cured. MDR-TB arises from interrupted or incomplete treatment of TB, and has become a major global health threat.

The Stop TB Partnership, which is hosted by the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland, consists of more than 900 international organizations, countries, donors from the public and private sectors, and nongovernmental and governmental organizations that are working together to eliminate TB. The Partnership's Global Plan to Stop TB (2006-2015) sets forth a roadmap for halving TB prevalence and deaths compared with 1990 levels by 2015.

The Lilly MDR-TB Partnership is a public-private initiative that encompasses global health and relief organizations, academic institutions and private companies and is led by Eli Lilly and Company. Its mission is to address the expanding crisis of MDR-TB. The partnership is pursuing a comprehensive strategy to fight MDR-TB through increasing drug supply at concessionary prices; research; providing training in prevention, treatment, and surveillance; promoting awareness and community support programs and sharing drug manufacturing technology with nations most at risk of MDR-TB.

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