



Media release: For immediate release

World TB Day Statement

on

CEPHEID rapid testing for COVID-19 designed to operate on any of Cepheid's more than 23,000 automated GeneXpert® Systems worldwide, with a detection time of approximately 45 minutes.

Tuesday, 24 March, 2020 (Paris, France) -- "The use of the GeneXpert platform, which although still not a true point of care test, revolutionised the diagnosis of *M. tuberculosis* complex, and how to use the platform is well known to laboratories across the globe, even in low- and middle-income countries," said **Dr Paula I Fujiwara**, Scientific Director of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union).

Today, Tuesday March 24 is World TB Day. The GeneXpert® test is a molecular test for tuberculosis (TB) and diagnoses TB by detecting the presence of TB bacteria, as well as testing for resistance to the drug Rifampicin.

"Adapting the same platform for use with COVID-19 could be easily and rapidly done. The need for testing is immense as we still don't know the true number of people who are infected in the world. The GeneXpert® platform could fill a crucial need, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

"The current limitation is the price of the test which currently sits at US\$20. The recent analysis by MSF's Access Campaign provides a cogent and well-reasoned argument for why and how the price can be reduced to approximately US\$5, and still make money for Cepheid. A win-win situation for both the company and the people in need."

References:

[Cepheid Receives Emergency Use Authorization from FDA for Rapid SARS-CoV-2 Test](#)
[MSF Access Campaign Technical Brief, Time for \\$5: GeneXpert Diagnostic Tests](#)

ENDS

Further Information:

Michael Kessler

Michael Kessler Media

The Union Media Relations

Mob: +34 655 792 699

Email: michael.kessler@intono-media.com

About the [International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease](#) (The Union)

The Union was founded in 1920 and is the world's first global health organisation. We are a global leader in ending TB, we fight the tobacco industry, and we solve key problems in treating major diseases. We use science to design the best treatments and policies for the most pressing public health challenges affecting people living in poverty around the world. The Union's members, staff and consultants operate in more than 140 countries and embody our core values of accountability, independence, quality and solidarity.

Twitter: @TheUnion_TBLH

Instagram: @theunion_tblh

Website: theunion.org