

PRESS RELEASE

INDIA'S LUNG HEALTH EXPERTS DISCUSS CHALLENGES AND SHARE LATEST RESEARCH AT PARIS CONFERENCE

***With as many as 2.4 million tuberculosis patients, India remains the country with
the most TB cases in the world
MDR-TB and mobile technology provide threats and opportunities***

31 October 2013/ Paris, France - Researchers and a representative from the Ministry of Health of India will share their findings and experiences at The Union World Conference on Lung Health in Paris this week. The conference is organised by The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) to address a wide range of lung health issues, many of which are challenges for India.

India has the highest incidence of TB in the world, according to the World Health Organization's Global Tuberculosis Report 2013, with as many as 2.4 million cases. The Report reveals that India also has the most missed TB cases of any country — 31% of the global total of missed cases. In addition, out of the 22 high-burden countries (HBCs), India was one that saw the greatest increase in multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB between 2011 and 2012. The Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (Chandigarh) has estimated that one person in India dies of TB every minute.

The causes and solutions to one of India's leading health challenges will be discussed throughout the conference, which will be held from 30 October through 3 November at the Palais des Congrès in Paris. Highlights of the sessions related to India include:

TUBERCULOSIS AND MULTIDRUG-RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS

- "Is MDR-/XDR-TB a real threat in India?" will be addressed by Chandra Kishore Mishra, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India at a Plenary Session on Friday, 1 November 2013 (12:00–12:30, Amphithéâtre Bleu, Palais des Congrès).
- The team from The Union South-East Asia Office in New Delhi will be very active at the conference. They have contributed to 14 posters and oral abstract sessions, many of them based on the findings from Project Axshya, a five-year civil society initiative to strengthen TB care and control in India. Funded by The Global Fund, Axshya involves 1,200 NGOs, 3,000 civil society organisations and 21,000 rural healthcare providers working together to bring TB information and services to 750 million people across 21 states. Posters at the conference cover topics such as improving TB care for tribal people and comparing the use of LED fluorescent microscopes with bright field microscopy under field conditions. The posters are on

display all week with discussion sessions on Friday, 1 November at 10:15–11:15, 12:45–14:15; Saturday, 2 November at 10:15–11:15,12:45-14:15; and Sunday, 3 November, 12:45–14:15 (Poster Area, Level 2, Palais des Congrès).

- “Using film and involving film celebrities for TB messaging and creating TB awareness: a report from Tamil Nadu, India” will be included in a Poster Discussion on Friday, 1 November 2013 from 10:15 – 11:15 in the Poster Area.
- “Airborne data: opportunities for electronic health to improve tuberculosis care and lung health” on Saturday, 02 November 2013 (08:00–10:00, Room 241) is a symposium that will include Ted Cohen and Ashok Kumar’s study on using electronic notification and geospatial data analysis.
- “Innovative approaches to bringing new TB diagnostics to the private sector” a symposium on Sunday, 03 November 2013 (14:00–16:00, Room 242AB) will include India's approach to the TBXpert Project.

AIR POLLUTION

- Inadequate cookstoves and the use of solid fuels for cooking and heating – a major problem in India – will feature in the symposium: “Climatic change and environmental air pollution: our rightful concern” on Friday, 01 November 2013, (08:00–10:00, Room 342A).
- “Unsafe air: where does it happen, how should it be managed and what are the ethical implications?” (Sunday, 03 November 2013, 14:00 –16:00, Room 251) is a symposium that will include speakers from India discussing issues from TB in prisons and passive smoking to lung health and ethics in difficult human environments.

TOBACCO CONTROL

- Dr Mira Aghi, winner of the American Cancer Society’s Luther L. Terry Award, will share her experiences from the field at a symposium on “Educational and behaviour change approaches towards tobacco control: a growing need” (Friday, 01 November 2013, 14:30–16:30, Room 253).
- “Feasibility of supply-side measure for tobacco’s endgame” will be a symposium on Saturday, 02 November 2013 (08:00–10:00, Room 253) including several speakers from India who will discuss topics such as subsidies for the tobacco industry and whether a gutkha (chewing tobacco) ban is the first step towards an endgame for tobacco in India.

“Every public health issue in India is challenging, due to the sheer size of the country and the population, and the complexity of its society. Nevertheless India has always been an innovator in TB research and continues to demonstrate that same creativity and determination today”, says José Luis Castro, Interim Executive Director of The Union. “The Union is proud to showcase all that India is achieving – as well as the daunting problems it faces, which, in many ways, are faced by all of us throughout the world”.

Further details about the 44th Union World Conference on Lung Health are available at: <http://www.worldlunghealth.org/conf2013/>.

###

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

The mission of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) is to bring innovation, expertise, solutions and support to address health challenges in low- and middle-income populations. With nearly 15,000 members and subscribers from 150 countries, The Union has its headquarters in Paris and offices serving the Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, North America and South-East Asia regions. Its scientific departments focus on tuberculosis and HIV, lung health and non-communicable diseases, tobacco control and research. Learn more at www.theunion.org

About the 44th Union World Conference on Lung Health

Since the early 1920s, The Union has been convening international conferences to disseminate the latest research on tuberculosis and other related issues, such as HIV/AIDS, asthma, pneumonia, non-communicable diseases and tobacco control. Some 2,500 delegates from 125 countries attend the 5-day scientific programme. For complete details, go to www.worldlunghealth.org

HOW TO COVER THE CONFERENCE IN PERSON / USING ONLINE RESOURCES:

Complete details about the 44th Union World Conference on Lung Health may be found on the conference website at www.worldlunghealth.org. Download the conference programme at worldlunghealth.org/conf2013/images/1_Paris2013/Forms/Final_Prog_2013.pdf and the Abstract Book at <http://www.worldlunghealth.org/conf2013/index.php/programme/abstracts/abstract-book>

The inaugural session and plenary sessions will be available via streaming video at www.theunion.org. Daily news, photos and short videos will also be posted on this site during the conference.

Following the conference, webcasts of most sessions will be accessible from www.worldlunghealth.org

Press credentials permit working journalists to have access to all conference sessions except for closed meetings. Register in person at the Palais des Congrès beginning at 08:00 on Wednesday, 30 October (please bring a press card and/or 2-3 relevant published clips).

Journalists can follow the conference on Twitter: [@UnionConference](https://twitter.com/UnionConference) and Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheUnionLungHealth.

For more information, to arrange an interview with a speaker or to confirm your interest in attending, please RSVP to: Tracey Johnston at tjohnston@worldlungfoundation.org or Sabrina Beaubay at sbeaubay@worldlungfoundation.org