



PRESS RELEASE

LEADING HEALTH EXPERTS FROM AFRICA SHARE LATEST RESEARCH ON ISSUES FROM TB-HIV TO TOBACCO CONTROL

*44th Union World Conference on Lung Health is taking place
at the Palais des Congrès in Paris from 30 October-3 November 2013*

31 October 2013 / Paris, France – Experts from across Africa will gather in Paris this week to share their latest research findings and experience at the 44th Union World Conference on Lung Health. Held each year by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), the World Conference is the largest focusing on the lung health challenges faced by low- and middle-income countries. Policy-makers, researchers and programme managers from 16 African countries will be on hand to discuss critical issues facing the continent, such as TB and HIV, child pneumonia and tobacco control.

With 9 of the 22 high-burden TB countries in Africa, tuberculosis is a major public health issue in the region, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. TB remains the leading cause of death among the large population with HIV, and drug-resistant TB strains continue to pose a critical challenge for TB control. Speakers will also discuss the ongoing and needless loss of young children to pneumonia and new efforts to address childhood TB more effectively. The campaign to prevent the pandemic of diseases caused by tobacco will be featured; and progress stemming from the use of new diagnostic tools, technologies and treatment regimens will also be presented.

Highlights of sessions focusing on Africa:

MULTIDRUG-RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS (MDR-TB)

- Nine francophone African countries are working with The Union to test a 9-month treatment regimen for multidrug-resistant TB that would reduce the challenges of treatment for both patients and health systems and produce better results. Dr Arnaud Trébuq, Director of Technical Assistance for TB and HIV at The Union, will discuss this project and be available for interviews at a press conference on Wednesday, 30 October (12:45–13:45, Room 242B, Palais des Congrès) and in a “Meet the Expert” session on Sunday, 3 November (08:00–09:00, Room Maillot, Palais des Congrès)

TB-HIV

- Researchers from Malawi and elsewhere will demonstrate how mathematical modeling can be used to understand the TB-HIV epidemic and inform policy decisions at a symposium “Optimising TB control in high HIV-prevalence settings” on Saturday, 2 November (8:00–10:00, Room 252 AB, Palais des Congrès).

CHILD LUNG HEALTH: PNEUMONIA AND TB

- Leading child lung health expert Dr Heather Zar of South Africa will speak on the challenge of child pneumonia in the Plenary Session on Saturday, 2 November (11:30 –12:30, Amphithéâtre Bleu, Palais des Congrès). She will also speak on childhood TB in other symposia. Zar is Professor and Chair of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health at Red Cross Children’s Hospital, University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa.

TOBACCO CONTROL

- Health ministers from Burkina Faso and Uganda will participate in “Tobacco Control in Africa: successes, obstacles and perspective”, the Plenary Session on Sunday, 3 November (11:30–12:30, Amphithéâtre Bleu, Palais des Congrès). With tobacco companies increasingly targeting low-income countries as new unregulated markets, tobacco control is a “burning” issue in Africa. Speakers at this session will be:
 - Mr Léné Sebgo, Minister of Health, Burkina Faso
 - Dr Dorcas Kiptui, Programme Officer, Division of Non-communicable Diseases, Ministry of Health, Kenya
 - Dr Elioda Tumwesigye, Honorable Minister of State for General Duties, Uganda
 - Dr Douglas Webb, Bureau for Development Policy, UN Development Programme (UNDP)

“Countries like Tanzania and Benin played a major role in working with The Union to develop and test the DOTS TB control strategy used to treat 56 million people worldwide since 1995”, says José Luis Castro, Interim Executive Director of The Union. “Yet Africa continues to bear 27 percent of the TB burden and faces other enormous challenges from HIV/AIDS to tobacco control. These two facts – detailing our success and the tasks ahead – illustrate the vital importance of the international collaborations that the Union World Conference fosters.”

Symposia and other sessions will focus on the following specific African nations:

Benin	Kenya	Tanzania
Botswana	Madagascar	Uganda
Burkina Faso	Malawi	Zambia
Cameroon	Nigeria	Zimbabwe
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Rwanda	
Ethiopia	South Africa	

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