



International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease

Health solutions for the poor

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The Union welcomes Bloomberg Philanthropies' renewed commitment to global tobacco control

22 March 2012, Paris/Singapore – Philanthropist and New York City Mayor Michel R. Bloomberg announced today an additional commitment of US \$220 million to the global fight against tobacco use.

The announcement, which came at the World Conference on Tobacco or Health in Singapore, will extend funding for the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use (BI) for four more years. The funds allocated will continue to support tobacco control efforts in low- and middle-income countries where 80% of the world's smokers live.

Since the initiative began in 2006, effective tobacco control policies have been implemented in 30 countries, covering 1.3 billion people and saving 3.7 million lives. The Bloomberg Initiative advocates for and assists governments in implementing proven policies and programmes to reduce tobacco use as outlined by the World Health Organisation's MPOWER measures.

"The Union welcomes this announcement at a time when awareness about tobacco as a common risk factor affecting non-communicable diseases is becoming more widespread. The global response to tobacco control will help support public health efforts in general to save more lives," said Dr. Nils Billo, Executive Director of The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union).

The Union manages grants supported by the World Lung Foundation with generous financial assistance from the Bloomberg Initiative. Through the Bloomberg Initiative, The Union has supported over 80 organisations in more than 30 countries. Some of the achievements to date have included:

- Several countries have instituted smokefree laws, locally and on a national level. Harbin, in China has enacted the most stringent local smokefree legislation that country. Several cities in Indonesia have gone smokefree, as has Islamabad in Pakistan. Countries that have approved national smokefree legislation include Brazil, Argentina, Lebanon and Nepal.
- Mexico, Pakistan, Chile, Laos and Nepal have introduced graphic health warnings.
- Increases in tobacco taxation have been implemented in several countries, such as Mexico, Turkey and Egypt.

In addition to managing grants, The Union also offers technical training courses based on the MPOWER measures. The Union's tobacco control training programme aims to contribute to capacity building in low- and middle-income countries by building individual and organisations skills and confidence to affect progressive change in tobacco control.

The Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use comprises of five partner organisations: the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Foundation, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the World Health Organization and the World Lung Foundation/The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease.

With continued support from the World Lung Foundation, The Union is committed to aid governments and organisations wanting to pursue tobacco control legislation, whether the goal is smokefree environments, increased taxation, graphic health warnings, coalition building or combating tobacco industry interference.

PRESS RELEASE

About the Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use (Bloomberg Initiative)

Tobacco use is the leading global cause of preventable death – killing almost six million people annually. The *Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use* is focused on reducing the public health impact of tobacco use globally, by implementing proven tobacco control policies in low- and middle-income countries where 80% of tobacco-related deaths occur. In its first five years, the *Initiative's* partners have supported governments and civil society groups by fostering the implementation of smoke-free legislation and other effective tobacco control policies. It is currently a 10-year program backed by nearly \$600 million in funding. *For more information, please visit www.mikebloomberg.com.*

About Bloomberg Philanthropies:

Bloomberg Philanthropies works primarily to advance five areas globally: the Arts, Education, the Environment, Government Innovation and Public Health. The *Bloomberg Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use* is focused on reducing the public health impact of tobacco use globally by implementing proven tobacco control policies in low- and middle-income countries where 80% of tobacco-related deaths occur. For more information please visit www.mikebloomberg.com

About 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 10,000 members and subscribers from 150 countries, The Union has its headquarters in Paris and offices serving the Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, 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.

