

**REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN**

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**IMPLEMENTING THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLITICAL
DECLARATION ON TUBERCULOSIS (TB) AND THE MULTISECTORAL
ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK TO END TB IN THE
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN REGION**

Objectives of the event

The objectives of the event are to brief Member States on the:

- United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Political Declaration “United to end TB: an urgent global response to a global epidemic” and the multisectoral accountability framework;
- the current TB situation, challenges, opportunities and way forward to reach the End TB targets and commitments made under the Political Declaration by 2022 and 2030;
- need to commit to actions for the timely implementation and reporting of the multisectoral accountability framework at country level in 2020 and to the UNGA high-level meeting in 2023.

Background

Ending TB by 2030 is a target of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the WHO End TB Strategy. The specific targets for ending TB include a 90% decline in deaths, an 80% decline in incidence and zero catastrophic costs for patients and their families. At the Seventy-first World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2018, Member States adopted resolution WHA71.3. This supported the Moscow Declaration to End TB and welcomed the draft version of the multisectoral accountability framework. It also requested the Director-General to continue to develop the framework, in close collaboration with all relevant international, regional and national partners and to provide technical support for national adaptation and use of the draft framework.

The first-ever UN General Assembly High-level Meeting on Tuberculosis was held on 26 September 2018 with the theme “United to end tuberculosis: an urgent global response to a global epidemic.” The Political Declaration from the meeting, A/RES/73/3, requested the WHO Director-General to continue to develop the multisectoral accountability framework in line with WHA resolution 71.3 and to ensure its timely implementation no later than 2019.

The Political Declaration sets targets to be met by 2022: finding and treating 40 million people with TB, including 3.5 million children and 1.5 million drug-resistant (MDR) TB cases, as well as providing preventive treatment to 30 million individuals. The Declaration reaffirms Member States’ commitment to: mobilize sufficient and sustainable financing for universal access to quality prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care of TB and to increase overall global investments to US\$ 2 billion; address the public health crisis of MDR TB; address childhood TB; contribute to antimicrobial resistance actions; identify missing cases; and promote public–private partnership and engage community and civil society.

The multisectoral accountability framework for TB aims to support effective accountability of governments and all stakeholders, at global, regional and country levels, in order to accelerate progress to end the epidemic, and to be fully aligned with the End TB Strategy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development. The Political Declaration requires a progress report in 2020 on global and national progress towards agreed TB goals. This report will serve to inform preparations for a comprehensive review by Heads of State and Government at a high-level UNGA meeting on TB in 2023.

The multisectoral accountability framework was one of the key areas for action identified in the Moscow Declaration, and the Political Declaration requests the WHO Director-General to finalize the framework and ensure its timely implementation no later than 2019.

The burden of TB in the Eastern Mediterranean Region is estimated at 810 000 cases annually, but only 537 761 cases were reported in 2018 which represents 65% treatment coverage. Similarly, 4666 drug-resistant cases were put on treatment that year out of 38 000 projected cases. This means that around one third of estimated cases were either undiagnosed or diagnosed but not notified to the national TB programme. For MDR or rifampicin-resistant tuberculosis (RR-TB), the detection rate is only around 13% of estimated cases. Four countries (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and Sudan) are responsible for more than 80% of missed cases.

High-level political commitment and support is urgently needed to address the key challenges of securing sustainable domestic financing, finding missing TB cases, addressing multidrug resistance and TB in children and fostering public–private partnership, establishing enabling environments and using efficient electronic surveillance systems and technologies.

Challenges in the Region

The missing third of TB cases represents a major challenge for TB control and care efforts. It reflects limited access to diagnostic services and/or failure to document all detected cases through a comprehensive surveillance system. Complex emergencies pose a serious problem for ending TB in the Region. Other significant challenges include a 36% overall funding gap and overreliance on international funding: 43% of the available budget comes from international sources and only 21% from domestic sources. There are also only limited partnerships between the private and public health sectors and with other relevant sectors.

Expected outcomes

- Commitment elicited and agreement reached on actions to implement the UNGA Political Declaration on pursuing a multisectoral approach, securing sustainable domestic financing, finding missing TB cases, addressing childhood TB and MDR-TB challenges, establishing an effective public–private mix and ensuring a regulatory framework and enabling environment to reach End TB targets.
- Member States updated on the TB situation, challenges, opportunities and way forward to reach the End TB targets and commitments made under the Political Declaration by 2022 and 2030.
- Member States briefed on the multisectoral accountability framework and commitment to actions elicited for the timely implementation and reporting of the accountability framework at country level in 2020 and to the UNGA high-level meeting in 2023.