

Debate Briefing

Ending Tuberculosis

7th June 2018, approx. 11.30 AM

Background

Tuberculosis (TB) remains the world's deadliest infectious disease, killing 1.7 million people last year. Years of neglect have led to the emergence and spread of drug-resistant strains of the disease, against which we are all ill-equipped to respond. TB threatens livelihoods, undermines economic development, and presents a real threat to global health security.

TB was declared a global health emergency in 1993. The Sustainable Development Goals envision ending TB by 2030, but at current rates of progress this target will not be met for 160 years. On the 26th of September, the first ever UN High Level Meeting on TB offers an unprecedented opportunity to turn the tide against this terrible disease.ⁱ The UK government has a leading role to play in making this a reality.

About TBⁱⁱ

- In 2016, 10.4 million people fell ill with TB and 1.7 million died, more than from HIV and Malaria combined.
- TB is the leading cause of death among people living with HIV, causing around 1 in 3 deaths.
- TB anywhere is TB everywhere. The UK continues to have one of the highest rates of TB in Western Europe, with over 5,000 cases reported in the last year.
- More than one-third of all people with TB are currently undiagnosed, often treated inappropriately or not at all. To reach the SDG target, states must commit to diagnosing and treating a cumulative 40 million people before 2022.
- TB is the only major drug resistant infection to be transmitted by air. Lord O'Neill's Independent Review on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) estimated that one-third of all AMR-associated deaths are currently caused by drug resistant TB.
- We continue to lack the tools we need to prevent, diagnose and treat TB effectively. Currently, research and development for TB receives less than half of the estimated USD 1.3bn annual funding need.
- People with TB continue to be stigmatised. Many patients also experience severe side-effects as well as catastrophic costs as a result of their treatment.
- The global response to TB remains underfunded, with current investment in TB programmes needing to be doubled in order to end TB by 2030.

The Price of a Pandemicⁱⁱⁱ

- From 2000 – 2015, 33 million people died because of TB, at a global economic cost of USD 617 billion.
- If efforts to tackle TB continue at the same rate of progress, a further 28 million people will die needlessly before 2030, at a global economic cost of USD 938 billion.
- Two-thirds of this economic impact will be concentrated to G20 States, while Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to face a 3.21% reduction in GDP due to multi-drug resistant TB alone.

UK Leadership in the fight against TB^{iv}

- The UK is the second largest donor to the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. The fund currently provides 65% of all international financing for TB.
- In 2016, the UK provided USD 101 million for global health R&D, making it the second largest public funder globally. 19% of this was spent on TB.
- UK healthcare workers, public health experts and academic researchers have been at the forefront of the global response to TB, treating patients, providing technical assistance and conducting cutting-edge research all over the world.
- The UK has been a global leader on the AMR agenda, with significant investments through the Ross Fund. The UK is also a founding member of the recently launched G20 AMR R&D Collaboration Hub, bringing together state and non-state actors to promote and coordinate research on drug-resistance.
- Over 50% of TB cases are concentrated to G20 countries. 19 Commonwealth countries are currently ranked as 'High Burden Countries' by the World Health Organization.

What needs to happen next^v

- The first UN High Level Meeting on TB will take place on the 26th of September during UN General Assembly week. It offers an unprecedented opportunity for Heads of Government to step-up global efforts to end TB. The Prime Minister must attend the High-Level Meeting in person.
- The UK Government should leverage its considerable political capital and financial investment to:
 - Demand and demonstrate decisive and accountable leadership
 - Close the gaps in TB prevention, diagnosis and treatment
 - Transform the TB response to be equitable, rights-based and people-centred
 - Accelerate the development of essential new tools to end TB
 - Invest the funds to end TB

About the debate^{vi}

The APPG on Global TB's co-chairs, Nick Herbert MP and Virendra Sharma MP, coordinated an application to the Backbench Business Committee and were allocated the first three-hour debate in the House of Commons Chamber on 7 June. The debate will be on the following motion:

That this House recognises that Tuberculosis (TB) remains the world's deadliest infectious disease, killing 1.7 million people a year; notes that, at the current rate of progress, the world will not reach the Sustainable Development Goal target of ending TB by 2030 for another 160 years; believes that, without a major change of pace, 28 million people will die needlessly before 2030 at a global economic cost of £700 billion; welcomes the forthcoming UN high-level meeting on TB in New York on 26 September as an unprecedented opportunity to turn the tide against this terrible disease; further notes that the UN General Assembly Resolution encourages all member states to participate in the high-level meeting at the highest possible level, preferably at the level of heads of state and government; and calls on the Government to renew its efforts in the global fight against TB, boost research into new drugs, diagnostics and a vaccine, and give its fullest possible support to the high-level meeting.

ⁱ [UN Resolution on UN High Level Meeting Modalities, A/72/L.40](#)

ⁱⁱ [WHO Annual TB Report 2017](#); [PHE Annual TB Report for England 2017](#); [O'Neill Review on Antimicrobial Resistance](#); [Treatment Action Group - TB Research Funding Trends 2005-2016](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Global TB Caucus, Price of a Pandemic 2017](#)

^{iv} [Global Fund Resource Mobilization](#); [Donor Tracker Global Health R&D](#); [Ross Fund](#); [G20 AMR R&D Collaboration Hub](#)

^v [APPG Letter to the Prime Minister](#); [Global TB Caucus Position Paper on UNHLM](#); [Stop TB Partnership Key Asks](#)

^{vi} [Order Paper](#); [Backbench Business Committee Meeting, 23/05/2018](#)