



**Meeting of the Coordinating Board of the  
Eastern Mediterranean Partnership to Stop TB  
December 1, 2008**

Second meeting of the Coordinating Board of the Eastern Mediterranean Partnership to Stop TB (*later to be referred as Regional Partnership*) was held in Cairo on Monday, December 1, 2008. The meeting was convened as per recommendation of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in August 2008 and coincided with the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the National Tuberculosis Programme managers of the Eastern Mediterranean countries, scheduled on December 1-3.

The following members, special advisors, observers and invitees participated: **Board:** Dr Awad Tag El Din (Chair), Dr Asma Elsony (Sudan), Ms. Zubaida Bouyad (Morocco), Dr Naguiba Lotfy (represented Rotary International-Egypt), Dr Khaled Abu Rumman (Jordan), Dr Akihiro Seita (WHO-EMRO), Dr Noor Ahmad Baloch (Pakistan); **Special Advisor:** Dr Zuhair Hallaj **WHO:** Dr Hussain A Gezairy (RD-EMRO), Dr Jaouad Mahjour (EMRO), Dr Karam Shah (represented Dr Faizullah Kaker, Afghanistan), Dr Munim Aayid (Sudan), Mr Wasiq Khan (EMRO); **Invitees:** Dr Leopold Blanc (WHO, Geneva), Ms Louise Baker (Stop TB Partnership Geneva), Dr Nadia Bedawy (ACSM Consultant Ministry of Health-Egypt), Dr Reza Masjidi (Iran) and Ms Eleem (Anoor MDR-TB Sanitarium Jordan).

The meeting was convened with the agenda to interact and discuss with National Tuberculosis Programme Managers scaling up Tuberculosis care in the region and to review progress made by secretariat and partners. Discussion was also on the agenda to identify key challenges faced in Partnership functioning and making it more result oriented.

The meeting started with a joint session in the morning with National Tuberculosis Programme Managers, STAG members, GFATM representatives, observers from partners, media and WHO field teams. Dr Hussein A. Gezairy, the Regional Director of WHO's Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean Region and Dr Awad Tag Eldin, the Chair of the Board jointly presided over the session.

After the Coffee break, the Board held a closed door session. At the beginning, Dr Gezairy welcomed the participants and reiterated Regional Office commitment to Partnership strengthening. He applauded the efforts of partners and secretariat and appreciated financial and technical support extended by Stop TB Partnership Geneva. He urged the Board and participants to help National Tuberculosis Programme Managers scale up TB care in the countries and work collaboratively for the patients support.

Later, progress reports were submitted by the secretariat and partners including Rotary International, Jordan Anti Tuberculosis Association, SoS Tuberculosis Association (Morocco) and the National Stop Tuberculosis Partnership Afghanistan. Following significant steps taken by the secretariat and partners were noted and appreciated by the Board:

## **Secretariat**

- The secretariat developed advocacy products on Tuberculosis and Multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis including collection of photos from Syria, Jordan, Pakistan and Egypt; video and 2 photo books, Partnership Financing Plan for 2009 and Arabic adaptation of Global Stop TB Ambassador Luis Figo campaign and Advocacy, Communication & social mobilization handbook.
- The secretariat organized advocacy meetings for Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Sudan at the occasion of 39<sup>th</sup> Annual IUATLD Conference in October in Paris and set up an exclusive regional advocacy booth at the conference venue.
- Technical assistance was provided by the secretariat to countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, Egypt,, Jordan & Pakistan) to strengthen advocacy, communication and social mobilization campaigns.
- Two Board meetings have been organized by the secretariat in Cairo since the Partnership launch in May 2008
- Coordination of the Board and Partners has been carried out since the Partnership launch

## **Partners**

- Rotary has expanded its exclusively set up Task Force of Tuberculosis in Egypt and has helped the secretariat extend its reach to Jordan where a memorandum of understanding is being finalized by Jordan Tuberculosis Programme and Rotary Jordan
- Jordan Anti Tuberculosis Association & National Programme jointly hosted Global Ambassador Anna Cataldi. She met with Minister for Health and HRH Princess Haya, the wife of ruler of Dubai HRH Rashed Almaktoom and requested support for Tuberculosis. JATA also organized support to Palestinian refugees with microscopes and regents and produced advocacy material in Arabic.
- SoS Tuberculosis Association has been working in Tuberculosis since 1990s and has strengthened its reach after joining the Partnership with provision of medicine, renovation of infrastructure of Tuberculosis care facilities in Morocco.
- National Partnership to Stop Tuberculosis has been launched with a secretariat and Board in place and activities have been.
- Pakistan and Sudan have already sought technical assistance from the secretariat to revive and strengthen existing National Partnerships.

**Decisions:** The Board after having a detailed discussion agreed upon the following actions:

- The Regional Partnership mandate will now be expanded to include
  - Support to be provided to National Tuberculosis Programmes to establish National Partnership. The secretariat will help countries seek seed financing from Global Stop TB Partnership Geneva.
  - The Regional partnership will be open to all individuals and institutions ready to work for Tuberculosis care in the Region or their country
- Dr Reza Masjidi from National Partnership to Stop Tuberculosis Iran will join the Board as a new member
- A Forum (general assembly of all partners) of the Partnership will be established to meet after every two or three years (depending on the availability of financing)

- Rotary International will explore the possibility of secondment of Executive secretary of the Regional Partnership
- WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean will continue to host the secretariat for next 6 months
- The Board like secretariat and partners, will request all members to present activity reports during the meetings

After the closed door session, the Board joined the National Tuberculosis Programme Managers and decided on the following action points to be acted upon jointly by the Regional Partnership and the National Programmes:

- National programme managers will discuss with national authorities to develop a national TB partnership by World TB Day: 24 March 2009
- National programme managers will map and visit private and civil societies to seek collaboration
- National programme managers will organize national workshops (meetings) with media people (Jan – Mar 2009)
- While the secretariat of the Regional Partnership will send letter to Health Ministers requesting establishment of national partnership
- The secretariat will organize a country visit of Arab cinema star Laial Eloui in Jan & Feb 2009
- The secretariat will help countries to arrange meetings with highest political levels for the national partnership launch
- The secretariat organize/facilitate “common” World TB Day activities for 22 countries
- The secretariat will develop/distribute partnership development guidelines to all countries

In the evening, a press briefing was organized by the secretariat addressed by the Board Chair Dr Awad Tag Eldin, Special Advisor Dr Zuhair Hallaj, Ms Laila Eloui and Dr. Leopold Blanc. The briefing was attended by media and the National Programme Managers. On this occasion the Board issued a call for action to governments, donors, civil society and media to step up efforts on Tuberculosis control and take measures to avoid multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis.