



## Welcoming Speech Médecins Sans Frontières

### MSF / MoH 4<sup>th</sup> TB Symposium - Eastern Europe and Central Asia: *“New treatments and approaches to tuberculosis”*

Médecins Sans Frontières, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Armenia, is pleased to bring together representatives from the ministries of health of the region as well as partners engaged in the fight against tuberculosis, especially drug resistant tuberculosis, for this forum of exchange on the topic: “New treatments and approaches to tuberculosis”.

For the first time in many years, those working in the field of tuberculosis have new hope for better treatments for drug resistant tuberculosis, with new drugs coming onto the market, re-purposed drugs expanding the treatment options and new shorter regimens being researched.

Médecins Sans Frontières is committed to the ultimate goal of shorter, more effective and user-friendly treatment regimens for multi-drug resistant and extremely drug resistant patients. Today, the challenges are many: introducing new drugs with enhanced pharmacovigilance, adapting the protocols, collecting data and evidences in support of shorter regimens, and ultimately conducting clinical trials to find the best combination of drugs and the appropriate duration of treatment.

It is the firm belief of MSF that together we can achieve these goals: through offering improved treatments options we will decrease morbidity and mortality due to drug resistant tuberculosis and subsequently reduce drug resistant tuberculosis transmission all over the region.

This platform of discussion is one of the many steps in working together to reach these objectives. This year, the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuberculosis Symposium of Eastern Europe and Central Asia will particularly look at innovations. It is by the joint combination of improved treatments and improved approaches to care, such as cross border TB control or nutritional and surgical support to patients, that treatment outcomes will improve.

We believe our common efforts have already brought and will continue to bring positive results in the fight against tuberculosis which could not have been possible without the strong political commitment of national health authorities and the support of the partners in the region.

Let’s stand together at this crucial time and make it our joint responsibility to rapidly improve the access to these new treatments and approaches, working together to make the best use of them.

I would like to thank the Ministry of Health of Armenia to jointly host the event and the Ministries of Health and partners from the region for their participation. I wish you a fruitful Tuberculosis Symposium.

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