

# ADVOCATES GUIDE TO UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON TB

## 1 WHAT IS A UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL MEETING?

A United Nations (UN) High-Level Meeting (HLM) is convened by the UN General Assembly (UNGA), the main decision-making body of the UN representing all 193 UN Member States. In this forum, Member States discuss and work together on a wide array of international issues covered by the UN Charter, such as development, peace & security, international law, etc. Agreement to hold a dedicated HLM on a specialized topic is taken in exceptional circumstances through a UN resolution, with the purpose of reaching agreement on cooperation measures and solutions on important global issues among Heads of State and governments.

Since the first Special Session on HIV/AIDS in 2001, the UN has called for various high-level meetings devoted to health issues, including UN HLMs on HIV/AIDS (2006, 2011, 2016, 2021), Non-Communicable Diseases (2011, 2014, 2018), Tuberculosis (2018 and 2023), Antimicrobial Resistance (2016), Universal Health Coverage (2019 and 2023), and new this year, pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (2023).



## ABOUT THE 2018 HLM ON TB

Following a campaign launched by Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, then Chair of the Stop TB Partnership Board and Minister of Health of South Africa, in December 2016, and supported by high-level leaders and members of the Board, the United Nations General Assembly agreed to hold a High-Level Meeting on TB in September 2018 through a resolution endorsed by Member States at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The resolution was ultimately tabled by the Global Health and Foreign Policy Initiative, a UN country grouping that includes Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa, and Thailand. The resolution, and specifically the text calling for the UN HLM on TB, was agreed unanimously by Member States, following a campaign by the global TB community and Stop TB partner organizations.

On 26 September 2018 at the UN General Assembly in New York, Member States resultantly held the first High-Level Meeting on TB. The meeting and consultation process co-facilitated by Japan and Antigua & Barbuda resulted in a Political Declaration endorsed by Heads of State and Government outlining the key commitments that must be met for the world to end TB by 2030, as called for in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Political Declaration ultimately built on previous commitments in the Moscow Declaration to End TB, the WHO End TB Strategy, and the Sustainable Development Goals.



2018 Political declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the fight against tuberculosis

2018 UN HLM on TB Key Targets & Commitments

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## WHY WILL A SECOND UN HLM ON TB TAKE PLACE IN 2023 & WHAT WILL IT ACHIEVE?

At the 2018 UN HLM on TB, world leaders committed to hold a 'comprehensive review by Heads of State and Government at a high-level meeting in 2023' in the Political Declaration. At the 2023 HLM Heads of States and governments will approve a concise and action-oriented Political Declaration, agreed in advance by consensus through intergovernmental negotiations, and this will be submitted by the President of the General Assembly for adoption by UNGA. The 2023 Declaration will endorse and further build on the 2018 Political Declaration. The 2023 UN HLM is an opportunity to build on previous UN HLMs and to reaffirm the global political commitment to ending TB. This meeting will be a major opportunity to mobilize the highest political support for TB as a cornerstone to achieving SDG3, and now more than ever advocates must unite and commit to action-oriented goals on TB for 2030.

The already low funding for the TB implementation response dropped by \$500 million from 2019 to 2020, and funding for R&D remained nearly unchanged at \$915 million. Meanwhile the Global Plan to end TB 2023-2030 showed that despite setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible to end TB by 2030 but the funding needs have now gone up substantially from the 2018 UN HLM target.

High-level meetings must lead to action and accountability at all levels and people affected by TB, TB communities, and civil society have a pivotal role to play in realizing both ambition and accountability in the much-anticipated 2023 Political Declaration.

**Based on the latest available data, progress towards meeting the 2018 UN HLM targets is dire. We are on track to meet only one of the numeric sub-targets - the target to ensure 6 million people living with HIV receive TB preventive treatment. We are not on track to reach the other targets and we are less than 50% towards reaching the \$15 billion promised in annual funding.**

The already low funding for TB implementation dropped by \$600 million from 2020 to 2022 to just \$5.4 billion, less than 45% of the \$13 billion annual target agreed at the 2018 HLM. And while funding for TB R&D reached a billion dollars worldwide in 2021, this was also less than 50% of the \$2 billion target set at the 2018 HLM.. Meanwhile the Global Plan to end TB 2023-2030 showed that despite setbacks due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is possible to end TB by 2030 but the funding needs have now gone up substantially from the 2018 UN HLM target.

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### 3 WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE HLM ON TB TAKE PLACE AND WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?

As per the [draft modalities resolution](#) released by the office of the President of the General Assembly (PGA) in late January 2023, the 2023 UN HLM on TB will take place on the 22nd of September 2023 during the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Week in New York City. The overall theme of the high-level meeting will be “Advancing science, finance and innovation, and their benefits, to urgently end the global tuberculosis epidemic, in particular, by ensuring equitable access to prevention, testing, treatment and care.” The one-day high-level meeting will consist of an opening segment, a plenary segment for general discussion, two multi-stakeholder panels, and a brief closing segment. Each of the two multi-stakeholder panels will be co-chaired by two representatives, one from a high tuberculosis-burden country and one from a low tuberculosis-burden country

with successful tuberculosis control programmes, to be appointed by the PGA from among the Heads of State or Government attending the high-level meeting, in consultation with Member States, taking into account gender balance, level of development and geographical representation.

The [agenda of the 2018 high-level meeting](#) was similar, consisting of an opening segment, a plenary segment for general discussion, two multi-stakeholder panels and a brief closing segment. You can watch part 1 and part 2 of the recording of the HLM on TB [here](#) and [here](#); the recording of the 1st multi-stakeholder panel is available [here](#), and the 2nd is [here](#).

## 4 WHO ARE THE CO-FACILITATORS OF THE 2023 HLM ON TB?

On 19th October, 2022, the President of the UN General Assembly announced the appointment of Poland and Uzbekistan as the co-facilitators of the 2023 UN High-Level Meeting on TB, led by H.E. Krzysztof Szczerski, Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations, and H.E. Bakhtiyor Ibragimov, Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations. The co-facilitators' role includes serving as neutral and impartial chairs in the negotiations on the Modalities Resolution and the final HLM Political Declaration, to serve as focal points in the processes leading up the HLM, and to support the President of the UN General Assembly to organize a successful meeting.



## 5 HOW CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THE HLM ON TB?

Entities which have been approved for special accreditation and those in consultative status with ECOSOC may register to attend the UN HLM in person. An application process for non-ECOSOC registered organizations will open in the first half of 2023 and more information will follow in due course. The UN HLM on TB will also be webcast.

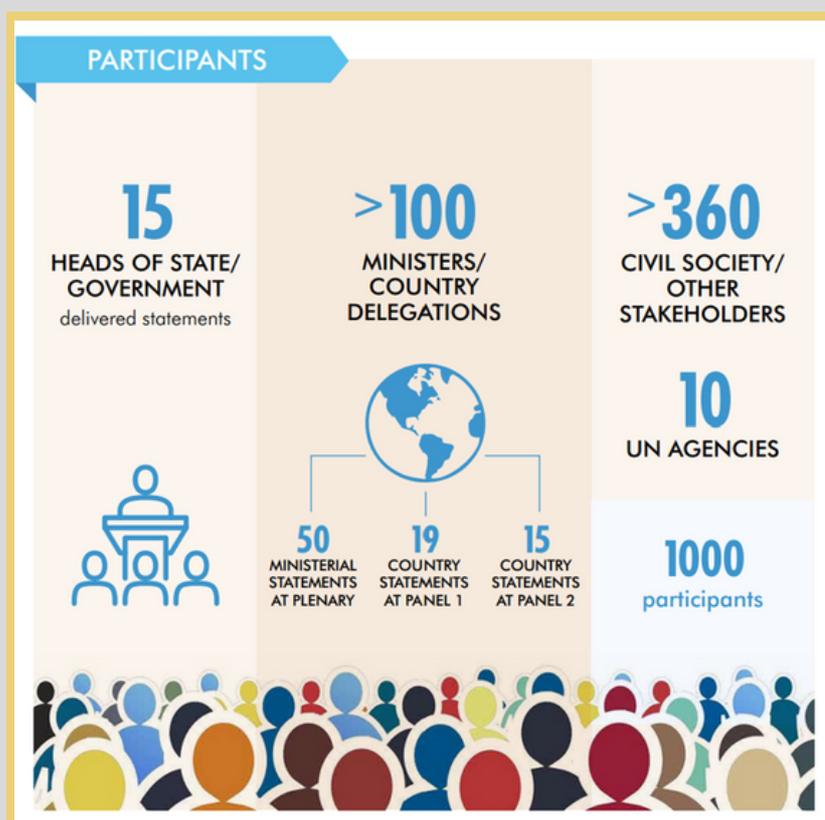
Aside from participating in the HLM itself, there will be opportunities to participate in a number of advocacy opportunities leading up to September. For example, there will be a multistakeholder hearing, a number of side events attached to it and the HLM, advocate activates instigated by GFAN and Stop TB to support you with regional and national level engagement, numerous consultations, opportunities to feed in affected community and civil society perspectives throughout the process and including into the zero draft of the Political Declaration, and more! Also, we will need you to highlight the HLM and community asks with your political decision-makers - ensuring that they know you want to see them at the Hearing and HLM and that you expect ambitious commitments to ending TB from them.



## 6 WHAT IS THE EXPECTED LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION AT THE UN HLM ON TB?

Previous UN HLMs have been attended by Heads of State, Government Ministers, UN Secretary-General and other UN leaders, civil society, community and civil society representatives, the private sector, UN Ambassadors, researchers, academics, parliamentarians, and other relevant partners. As detailed in the [WHO post meeting brochure](#), the 2018 HLM on TB captured the following audience:

Member States are encouraged to engage at the highest possible level, preferably at the level of Heads of State and government. Observers of the General Assembly and other stakeholders should also be represented at the highest possible level. Further, the UN HLM presents an opportunity to move health discussions beyond the sole domain of Health Ministries and to engage other sectors, such as Ministries of Finance, for coordinated action.



## 7 WHAT ARE THE KEY MOMENTS FOR ENGAGING IN POLICY AND ADVOCACY PROCESSES?



Graphic 1

There will be a number of ways that affected communities and civil society can engage throughout the 2023 TB HLM process. Graphic 1 provides a high level snapshot of key moments that the hub will be coordinating action around. To stay up to date with the latest information and opportunities for advocacy on the #2023TBHLM we recommend you [join this listserv](#) and attend our monthly deep dive calls with partners. You can find all the latest information and registration links [on our landing page](#).

## 8 SIX REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD ENGAGE IN #2023TBHLM ADVOCACY AND WHAT IMPACT WE COULD HAVE

- Securing ambitious commitments and target in the Political Declaration can translate into more ambitious targets, policies, strategies, and financing at national level
- A Political Declaration with ambitious time bound commitments will require increased TB funding to meet the targets, especially if they are translated and adopted at national level. This offers an opportunity to challenge countries to increase TB budgets.
- The HLM on TB offers an opportunity to highlight the critical role of civil society and TB communities as leaders in the fight against TB, and to ensure governments involve and consult them in all stages of the TB response
- HLMs are typically attended by senior political leaders - 15 Heads of State, 60 Ministers of Health, and 16 Ministers of Foreign Affairs attended the 2018 UNHLM on TB. The 2023 HLM offers an opportunity to engage national political leaders who have the power to increase resources for the TB response.



- The HLM offers a high-visibility platform for countries to speak during their plenary session speeches at the HLM against the backdrop of UNGA week. This offers an opportunity to put a spotlight on countries TB progress and to challenge political leaders to pledge new commitments during the HLM.
- Countries often include civil society and TB community representatives in their national delegations to HLMs, which offers an opportunity for visibility and strong engagement with the government.

## 9 WILL THERE BE A MULTISTAKEHOLDER HEARING IN THE LEAD UP TO THE HLM?

Yes! We do not yet know the exact date but the draft Modalities Resolutions indicates that it will take place no later than June 2023.

In advance of the 2018 HLM on TB, an interactive civil society hearing was held on 4 June 2018. With over 400 registrants, the hearing was well attended by civil society representatives, parliamentarians, NGOs, academia, medical associations and the private sector, as well as people affected by TB and broader communities.

Underscoring the great work of advocates calling for commitment at the highest level to civil society, the hearing was opened by top leadership from the UN and partners including the UN Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly. The hearing was organised by the PGA, with the support of WHO and the Stop TB Partnership, and it contributed to preparation for an impactful high-level meeting. The participants provided their vision and recommendations to members of the UN General Assembly for the high-level meeting across four interactive panels framed thematic discussions: Reaching all People Ill and Affected by TB; Financing, Innovation, and Partnerships to Prioritise Communities in an Equitable, Person-centred, Rights-based Response. Learn more about the 2018 hearing by watching recordings of part 1 and part 2 here and here.



Photo Credit: WHO, Stop TB Partnership & GCTA

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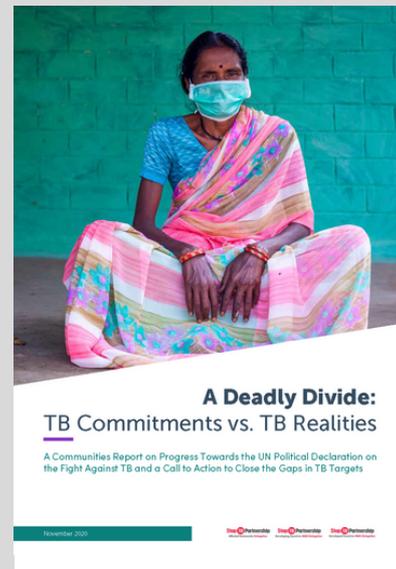
## HOW WILL THE UN POLITICAL DECLARATION BE DEVELOPED?

The two co-facilitators will submit a 'Zero Draft' i.e the first draft of the Political Declaration to the PGA and the President will present it to the UN Member States. So that affected communities and civil society's voice feed into the UNHLM Zero Draft, the co-facilitators must consider the outputs of the Multi-stakeholder Hearing, and we will be pushing to make sure this becomes the case.

The 'Zero Draft' typically includes all language and text submitted by member states and is the basis for member states negotiations conducted in New York by Permanent Missions to the UN to produce a final declaration. The 'Zero Draft' is thus a key opportunity for affected communities and civil society to get priority language and asks included. As the TB affected community and civil social coordination hub it will be critical for us to engage in advocacy efforts with our members of parliament and Permanent Missions to the UN to influence the outcome of the Political Declaration in a way to centre an agenda for action that prioritises our key asks.

Community led asks for the 2023 HLM are already underdevelopment (e.g. Stop TB Partnership is currently developing a key asks document for the Political Declaration, based on the Global Plan to End TB 2023-2030 and a Deadly Divide 2.0 Report is being developed) and once these are available, you may wish to adapt the key asks based on your own national priorities as the basis for engagement with your government.

The final Political Declaration is expected to be endorsed by Heads of State at the UN HLM in September, 2023.



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## HOW IS THE TB COMMUNITY ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES MOBILISING AROUND THE OTHER TWO ALIGNED HLMS?

Three high-level meetings on health are scheduled in 2023. Alongside the high-level meeting on TB, a high-level meeting on universal health coverage (UHC), and a high-level meeting on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (PPPR) will take place. The team at GFAN is tapping into the affected community and civil society efforts to equip and mobilize advocates around both the HLM on UHC and PPPR. We hope to share best practices, knowledge, and advocacy muscle where appropriate. Joint opportunities for aligning agendas might also be supported by the UN General Assembly. You too can engage with partners working on the HLM on UHC and PPPR by joining their newsletters and calls. Note that while there is no dedicated platform for communities engaging with the PPPR HLM, the Pandemic Action Network has been briefing and engaging their members in partnership with GFAN.

The #2023TBHLM Affected Communities and Civil Society Coordination Hub is hosted by the Global Fund Advocates Network and supported by the Stop TB Partnership.