

# MIGRATION AND TUBERCULOSIS

## CROSS BORDER TB CONTROL AND CARE IN CENTRAL ASIAN REGION



Press Release

### Second Regional High-Level Meeting on Cross-Border Tuberculosis Control in the Central Asian Countries Held in Astana

**Astana, December 8, 2016.** The second regional high-level meeting on “Migration and Tuberculosis (TB): Cross-Border TB Control in the Central Asian Countries” was held in Astana on December 7-8, 2016.

The event was organized as part of the implementation of the Republic of Kazakhstan’s 2014-2020 Comprehensive Plan of TB Control and “Addressing Cross Border TB, M/XDR-TB and TB/HIV Among Labor Migrants,” a program supported by Project Hope, a primary grant recipient of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (“the Global Fund”). The objective of the meeting was the development of mechanisms for intraregional coordination and interaction in TB diagnostics, treatment, and pre-departure orientation for migrant workers.

The Republic of Kazakhstan Ministry of Health and Social Development, Project HOPE, and the Republic of Kazakhstan National Center for Tuberculosis Problems hosted the meeting with financial support from the Global Fund and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Representatives of government agencies, national TB programs and migration services from the Central Asian countries, Armenia, Russia and Ukraine, as well as experts from the World Health Organization (WHO), the STOP TB Partnership, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Rutgers University Global TB Institute (U.S), and international NGOs and civil society took part in this two-day event.

The meeting participants presented the results of the implementation of the 12-month Action Plan/Road Map, which was developed at the first high-level meeting on November 19-20, 2015 in Astana, and formulated the mechanisms and subsequent practical steps require for the execution of bilateral agreements on cross-border TB control between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and between Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. The drafts of these agreements have been developed by the countries’ inter-sectoral working groups, which met throughout the year. Elzhan Birtanov, the Republic of Kazakhstan Vice Minister of Health and Social Development, emphasized that “the signing of the bilateral agreements is critical for effective regional cooperation in TB prevention, control and care in the Central Asian region” and praised Project HOPE and its partners for spearheading this effort.

“This meeting attests to the commitment of the Central Asian countries to collaboration in TB control not only on the regional level but also on the national level with engagement of all stakeholders: government agencies, international organizations, and the civil society. We are happy to note that as a result of this dialog, we have accomplished significant progress toward the signing of bilateral agreements, which will provide long-term mechanisms for effective cross-border TB control,” noted Linda Heitzman, Project HOPE’s Executive Vice President.

The Meeting participants have adopted a resolution summarizing recommendations on specific aspects of the implementation of a patient-centered approach in the treatment of TB among migrants and developed an Action Plan/Road Map that will serve as a guiding document for the country and regional working groups over the next 12 months in preparation for the finalization and signing of the bilateral agreements on cross-border TB control. The implementation of the Action Plan/Road Map will be coordinated with the Central Asian Countries’ national TB programs and is funded by the Global Fund, USAID, and other donors to coordinate effective TB control, especially with respect to pre-departure orientation and post-return TB treatment monitoring of migrant workers in their home countries.

###

