

# MIGRATION AND TUBERCULOSIS

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



### Press Release

#### **Cross-Border Tuberculosis Control in the Central Asian Region Discussed in Astana, Kazakhstan**

On December 5-6, 2018, the 4th High-Level Regional Meeting on “Migration and Tuberculosis (TB): Cross-Border TB Control and Care in the Central Asian Region” was held in Astana. Central Asia government officials, national TB program and migration authority representatives, experts from the World Health Organization (WHO), the STOP TB Partnership, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society participated to develop mechanisms for regional coordination of TB diagnostic and treatment efforts among labor migrants.

During the plenary sessions participants reviewed the performance of the 12-month Action Plan and Roadmap for Cross-Border TB control, the results of the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending TB, and further steps for the implementation of the declaration of the U.N. General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Ending TB in Central Asia in the context of cross-border TB control. Speakers presented the updates on finalizing the Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan-Tajikistan bilateral agreements on cross-border TB control and how those countries use the WHO electronic TB register platform.

The participants discussed further implementation of patient-centered services for labor migrants, issues of stigma and its impact on TB detection and treatment, inter-sectoral cooperation, and multi-sectoral partnerships during working group meetings. Leading international experts shared best practices in TB care and their adaptation for the implementation in the Central Asian region.

“High-level meetings held in Kazakhstan for four consecutive years have now become an annual tradition. They serve as an effective platform for constructive discussion of the current issues in cross-border TB control with the participation of government and non-government institutions from the Central Asia region, and international experts and organizations. I am pleased to note that the finalized bilateral agreements between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and between Kazakhstan and Tajikistan attest to the

effective cooperation among the Central Asian countries. I would like to thank the Republic of Kazakhstan Ministry of Health for hosting this annual event and for effective implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to Fight TB in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2014-2020,” noted Mariam Sianozova, Project HOPE’s Senior Regional Director for Europe and Eurasia.

As a result of the meeting, participants adopted a resolution summarizing recommendations for further cross-border TB control in the Central Asia region. The resolution will be sent to the ministries of health and other agencies of Central Asian governments engaged in migration-related issues. Participants developed an Action Plan and Roadmap for Cross-Border TB control for the next 12 months, including specific activities and measures for synergized and effective efforts across the region.

The event also featured the *Come Back Home Healthy!* photo exhibition to bring into public focus TB among vulnerable population groups. The photo exhibition opened last year as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional High-Level Meeting on “Migration and Tuberculosis (TB): Cross-Border TB Control and Care in the Central Asian Region.” At that time, photographs from Kazakhstan were presented. This year, works from other Central Asian countries: the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were also included. Organized by Project HOPE with support from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the exhibit also toured in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.

The 4th High-Level Regional Meeting on “Migration and Tuberculosis (TB): Cross-Border TB Control and Care in the Central Asian Region” was held as part of the Comprehensive Plan to Fight TB in the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2014-2020 and the “Addressing Cross-border Control of TB, TB with Multi- and Extensive Drug Resistance (MDR/XDR-TB) and TB/HIV among Labor Migrants in the Republic of Kazakhstan” Program. This program is implemented by Project HOPE – a global health and humanitarian assistance organization - under a grant of the Global Fund and USAID. The meeting was organized by the Republic of Kazakhstan Ministry of Health National Scientific Center of Phthisiopulmonology and Project HOPE with financial support from the Global Fund and USAID.

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