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THE 50TH UNION WORLD CONFERENCE ON LUNG HEALTH
30 OCTOBER – 2 NOVEMBER 2019 | HYDERABAD, INDIA

Media Release

For Immediate Release

The Honourable Vice-President of India Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu to inaugurate the 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health in Hyderabad

Thursday, 24 October, 2019 (Paris, France; Hyderabad, India) – The Honourable Vice-President of India, Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu, will be the Chief Guest of the 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health to be held in Hyderabad, India and will officially inaugurate the conference at its Opening Ceremony next Wednesday, 30 October.

"We are delighted that the Honourable Vice-President of India has accepted our invitation to attend and formally open the conference", said José Luis Castro, Executive Director of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union). "We are at a critical juncture in the fight against the tuberculosis (TB) epidemic in India and we are grateful for this incredible support from the Government of India, which is at the forefront of the global effort to end the emergency".

In 2018, 10 million people globally fell ill with TB and 1.5 million died from the disease. India has the highest TB burden in the world, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi has committed to eliminate TB in India by 2025, five years ahead of the official UN target.

Up to 4,000 delegates including senior figures from government, health officials, doctors, researchers, nurses, TB survivors and civil society organisations from around the world, are expected to attend the Union World Conference, the first in more than half a century to be held in India.

Film and television actress Claire Forlani has accepted a role as ambassador for The Union and will also speak at the opening ceremony. The theme of the conference is Ending the Emergency and the event is expected to announce a series of global news announcements around prevention efforts that are predicted to have significant impact on the epidemic.

Speakers at the opening ceremony will also include Dr Ren Minghui, Assistant Director-General at the World Health Organization, senior representatives of the State of Telangana, and Nandita Venkatesan, a TB survivor, activist and journalist from Mumbai.

On Tuesday 29 October, the conference will also host the inaugural Survivors Summit, which is expected to be attended by hundreds of survivors of TB and other lung diseases from around the world.

The scale of the TB global health emergency has been acknowledged by the United Nations (UN), which held the inaugural High-Level Meeting on TB in New York last September, culminating in a Political Declaration signed by world leaders committed to ending TB by 2030.
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About the 50th Union World Conference on Lung Health

The Union World Conference on Lung Health, convened by the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union), is the world’s largest gathering of clinicians and public health workers, health programme managers, policymakers, researchers and advocates working to end the suffering caused by lung disease, with a focus specifically on the challenges faced by low-and lower-middle income populations. Of the 10 million people who die each year from lung diseases, some 80 percent live in these resource-limited settings.

Organising international conferences on TB and related subjects has been a core activity of The Union since its founding in 1920.

Twitter: @UnionConference

About the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union)

The Union was founded in 1920 and is the world’s first global health organisation. We are a global leader in ending TB, we fight the tobacco industry, and we solve key problems in treating major diseases. We use science to design the best treatments and policies for the most pressing public health challenges affecting people living in poverty around the world. The Unions members, staff and consultants operate in more than 140 countries and embody our core values of accountability, independence, quality and solidarity.

Twitter: @TheUnion_TBLH

About the Union South-East Asia (USEA)

USEA provides public health expertise to the region's governments, civil society, corporations and international agencies on tuberculosis (TB) control and tobacco control; it also conducts operational research, capacity-building programmes and grant-monitoring services.