

**Statement by Medicus Mundi International
to the 67th Session of the World Health Assembly
on agenda item 12.1 “Draft global strategy and targets for tuberculosis prevention,
care and control after 2015”
delivered by Gene Alzona Nisperos**

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the opportunity to address the distinguished Members of the World Health Assembly on behalf of Medicus Mundi International and the People’s Health Movement.

PHM recognizes the importance of TB on the WHO agenda. On one hand, it reiterates the continuing commitment by Member States on TB. On the other hand, it is a manifestation that TB remains a significant public health concern and that long-lasting solutions remain elusive.

The proposed Global Strategy ([A67/11](#)), like the many that came before it, is limited by its clinical framework - the reliance on diagnostics, medicines, research, and innovation - with focus on cure and treatment. Yet despite decades of similar programmes and strategies, TB persists.

The failure of earlier programs to control TB is rooted in poverty and marginalization, and not merely the lack of access to medication, poor compliance, or insufficient TB surveillance. The persistence of TB is linked to the failure to address social determinants of health. In its current form, the Global Strategy may simply repeat the shortcomings of previous strategies.

PHM believes that the Global Strategy can be something creatively new for TB, especially with its multi-sectoral approach, if “appropriate” emphasis is placed on integration rather than on vertical programmes. Integration means coordinated health systems that simultaneously involve multiple programmes, stakeholders, and initiatives across a continuum of concerns, from health services to socioeconomic factors.

This new plan must be embedded in a Primary Health Care-oriented approach, with inter-sectoral and participatory processes. PHM believes that TB programmes should be fully in the public sector, have a strong primary care focus, be integrated with specialized care, and be supported by proper technical backing.

While governments are being called upon to do their part in ending the TB epidemic, a higher level of accountability should be expected of drug industry actors. Lastly, policies and strategies have to explicitly address the issues of fundamental human rights, ethics, and equity.

Thank you.

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