

To: The Right Honourable Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Langevin Block
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

CC: The Honourable Ginette Petitpas-Taylor, P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Jane Philpot, P.C., M.P.
The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, P.C., M.P.

August 29, 2018

Dear Prime Minister,

In 2017, you addressed the UN General Assembly, speaking to Canada's commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Indigenous rights in Canada and globally. At the onset of this year's UN General Assembly during the High-Level Meeting (HLM) on Tuberculosis (TB), you will have an opportunity to update Member States and the world on how Canada has progressed towards the SDGs with its domestic and global leadership on TB. This leadership is significant and influential. Canada is a global leader fighting TB – a top and founding donor to the Global Fund, the primary donor to TB REACH, and more recently announcing that it will end the TB epidemic across Inuit Nunangat by 2030, in partnership with Inuit Tapiirit Kanatami (ITK).

These are ambitious goals and this work is reflective of what Canada stands for globally: multilateralism, building partnerships and cooperation. This is the kind of leadership that will be required to globally achieve SDG 3 – to end the epidemics – and bring an end to tuberculosis, the leading cause of death for people with HIV around the world and the leading global infectious killer.

It is with this in mind that we, the undersigned community of Canadian NGOs, academics and professionals working to eradicate TB, **urge you to lead our country's national delegation at the UN High-Level Meeting on TB on September 26, 2018**, a landmark global event that has the power to lead the international community to a world free from TB. Your leadership on the global stage can play a pivotal role in encouraging participation and commitments from fellow leaders.

Additionally, Canada can help ensure the HLM on TB is successful in several ways:

- 1. Transform the TB response to be equitable, rights-based and people-centred.**
- 2. Ensure a gendered approach to the fight against TB.**
- 3. Invest the funds necessary to end TB.**

Under your leadership, Canada has been a strong supporter of human rights, including Indigenous rights. Canada can confidently push for an equitable, rights-based and people-centred approach to the global TB response. This will be necessary to tackle inequity and address the social determinants of health that cause and perpetuate cycles of poverty, where diseases like TB flourish. Canada can ensure that the HLM results in a transformative global TB response that is equitable, rights-based and people-

centred. This includes robust and well-resourced community-led responses and the meaningful engagement of and support to communities with lived experience.

Furthermore, **Canada's leadership on gender can help to ensure that women are no longer neglected in the global fight against this epidemic.** Though the majority of TB infection lies with men, the burden in many regions falls heavily on women. TB is a family disease, and women, who are most often the caregivers, carry the welfare, and burden of families and communities. TB is a top killer for women of reproductive age and is even more devastating for communities with high rates of HIV. Facing social stigma and barriers to care, women are often the last to receive diagnosis and treatment. Women, pregnant women, children, and other vulnerable groups including people living with HIV must be prioritized.

There are currently four million people around the world with TB who are missing from diagnosis, treatment and care. Included in the missing millions is an Inuit teenager from Nunavut, who died of TB in 2017, diagnosed hours before her death. **Canada can help play a role in finding these missing people and close the gaps in diagnosis, treatment and prevention, in particular through key investments in TB programming and R&D.**

The High-Level Meeting comes at a critical time in the fight against TB. Engagement at the highest levels of government from across the globe is essential to ensure this meeting becomes a true turning point in inspiring the urgent investments and actions. **Ending TB will require coordinated leadership at the Head of State and Government level.** We respectfully ask for your continued leadership at the domestic and global level in advancing this critical global health agenda. Join global leaders, including Heads of State, Bill Gates, and others to leverage the unprecedented opportunities presented by the High-Level Meeting on TB.

You've taken bold steps. You've committed to addressing TB at home, you've committed to reposition Canada as a leader on the international stage, and you have the ear of the global community and strong relationships with fellow Heads of State and Government. Now you have the chance to do something historic – to help end an epidemic that has plagued communities and accosted economies for far too long. We, the undersigned, urge you to join other global leaders in New York this September to do just that – to commit to end TB once and for all.

Sincerely,

Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN)

Canadian AIDS Society (CAS)

Canadian Treatment Action Council (CTAC)

Canadian African Partnership Network (CAP Network)

CATIE

Dignitas International

Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN)

Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD)

ICASO

Lung Association, Saskatchewan

Plan International Canada

Realize

RESULTS Canada

See Change Initiative

STOP TB Canada

Gonzalo G. Alvarez, MD, MPH, FRCPC, Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, School of Epidemiology and Public Health, University of Ottawa, Scientist, Ottawa Hospital Research Institute, Head of Division of Respiriology, Department of Medicine, The Ottawa Hospital

Marcel Behr, MD, FCAHS, FRSC, Professor of medicine, Chief of infectious diseases, McGill University

Menn Biagtan, MD, MPH, Vice-President, Health Initiatives and Programs/Secretariat, British Columbia Lung Association/The Union-NAR (IUATLD)

Dr. Sarah Brode, MD MPH FRCPC, Tuberculosis, West Park Healthcare Centre, Staff Respiriologist, University Health Network, Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto

Amrita Daftary, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor of Research, McGill University, Dept. of Epidemiology, Biostatistics & Occupational Health

Dr. Edward Ellis, Former Manager, Tuberculosis Prevention and Control, Public Health Agency of Canada; Current: Public Health and Preventive Medicine Consultant

Dina Fisher, MSc MD FRCPC, Medical Director Calgary Tuberculosis Services, Division of Respiratory Medicine, University of Calgary

Dr. Jennifer Gardy, Associate Professor, Canada Research Chair in Public Health Genomics, MSFHR Scholar, School of Population and Public Health, UBC, BC Centre for Disease Control

Sophie Huddart, MSc, PhD Candidate in Epidemiology, McGill University, Dept of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health, McGill International TB Centre

Faiz Ahmad Khan, Medical Director TB Clinic, Montreal Chest Institute, McGill University Health Centre & Associated Director of Clinical Research, McGill International TB Centre

Emily MacLean, MSc, PhD Candidate in Epidemiology, McGill University, Dept of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health, McGill International TB Centre

Renata E Mares, RN, BScN, MIPH, Public Health Nurse

Madlen Nash, Hon. BSc, MSc Candidate in Epidemiology, McGill University, Dept of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health, McGill International TB Centre

Olivia Oxlade, PhD, McGill International TB Centre

Prof Madhukar Pai, MD, PhD, FCAHS, Canada Research Chair in Epidemiology & Global Health, Director, McGill Global Health Programs, Director, McGill International TB Centre

Maria Pavkovic, RN, BScN, MPH(c), Regional TB Case Manager (Kivalliq Region) – A/Director of Population Health, Department of Health Government of Nunavut

Elizabeth Rea, MD MSc FRCPC, Associate Medical Officer of Health, Tuberculosis Program, Toronto Public Health

Mabel Rodrigues, PhD, Team Lead, Mycobacteriology/TB Laboratory, Team Lead, Technical Support or Lab Support Services, BCCDC Public Health Laboratory, Provincial Health Services Authority Laboratories

Erwin Schurr, Ph.D., Distinguished James McGill Professor, Human Genetics and Medicine, McGill University

Kevin Schwartzman MD, Professor of Medicine and Director, Respiratory Division, McGill University

Alice Zwerling, PhD, MSc, Assitant Professor, School of Epidemiology & Public Health, University of Ottawa