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Date: 16 April 2024

Ms Anniki Lai
Deputy Secretary General on Health
Ministry of Social Affairs
Suur-Ameerika 1
10122 Tallinn
Estonia

Our reference:	Your reference:
Notre référence:	Votre référence:
Unser Zeichen:	Ihr Zeichen:
См. наш номер:	На Ваш номер:

Dear Ms Lai,

Request for Nomination to attend the Regional Meeting Organised by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the Federal Ministry of Health of Germany on Improving Access and Availability of Medicines for TB and DR-TB in Europe, 3-4 June 2024 in Berlin, Germany

Since 2022, WHO has recommended the adoption of 6-month short all-oral regimens for treating the majority of patients with multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB), containing bedaquiline, pretomanid, linezolid, and moxifloxacin. These regimens have demonstrated high effectiveness and safety, especially in reducing the therapy duration from 20 to 6 months and minimizing the pill burden. However, the high costs of the regimen components in Central and Western European countries, coupled with the escalating number of DR-TB notifications, pose a significant limitation to the widespread adoption of these new recommendations for the benefit of patients. Recognizing the urgency of the situation and the escalating demand for DR-TB medicines, WHO and partners are planning to collaborate closely with Member States to collectively address concerns related to access and availability of medicines for TB and DR-TB. Notably, several Central and Western European countries have already raised these concerns at the Second UN High-level meeting on TB during the 78th UN General Assembly in September 2023 in New York. Unfortunately, this situation does not seem to have improved since then.

To address this, the WHO Regional Office for Europe, jointly with the Federal Ministry of Health of Germany are organizing a regional meeting on Improving Access and Availability of Medicines for TB and DR-TB in Europe. The meeting will take place on 3-4 June 2024 in Berlin, Germany. This meeting will gather representatives of ministries of health, national drug regulatory agencies, public health professionals, partners, and supranational stakeholders to discuss, share insights, and collectively work towards effective national and supranational solutions to enhance access and availability of medicines for TB and DR-TB.

I have the pleasure to extend an invitation to this meeting to you and kindly ask you to nominate representatives from the national drug regulatory authority and officers responsible for/coordinating the procurement and supply management of medicines for participation in this meeting. Regrettably, the organizers will not be able to cover costs associated with travel and accommodation but will provide lunches and coffee during the meeting.

Address of the venue: WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence, Prinzessinnenstrasse 17-18, 10969 Berlin, Germany

WHO strongly encourages in-person participation; however, the remote format will also be possible to extend the audience. The provisional agenda, scope and purpose, and further details will be shared by 1 May 2024. Additionally, the format of the meeting is hybrid, so there will be a possibility for other colleagues to join remotely.

For organizational purposes, we kindly ask you to return nominations by 25 April 2024 and send confirmation to Dr. Askar Yedilbayev, Regional TB Adviser, at yedilbayeva@who.int

We truly hope you will find joining this meeting interesting, and we will be happy to see you in Berlin.

Yours Sincerely,



Mr Robb Butler
Director
Division of Communicable Diseases, Environment and Health

Copy for information to:

Ms Triin Uusberg, Head, European Union Affairs and International Co-operation Department, Ministry of Social Affairs, Suur-Ameerika 1, 10129 Tallinn, Estonia

H.E. Ms Riia Salsa-Audiffren, Ambassador Representative of the Republic of Estonia, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Estonia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28A, CH-1209 Genève, Switzerland

H.E. Mr William Mart Laanemäe, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the Republic of Estonia, Frederiksgade 19, 4th floor, 1265 Copenhagen K, Denmark

Ms Kristina Köhler, Liaison Officer, WHO Country Office, Estonia, Paldiski Road 81, 10617 Tallinn, Estonia