



MEDIA ADVISORY

UNVEILING NOVEL STRATEGIES TO COMBAT DRUG RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS

February 27, 2008 (VANCOUVER) – In Vancouver, North American and European health care experts are meeting this week, February 29, starting at 8:00 am, to discuss new findings and novel treatment strategies for Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (TB). The AMMI Canada – CACMID Annual Conference 2008 will also consider related issues such as:

- **Global TB: from Multidrug Resistance (MDR TB) to Extremely Drug Resistance (XDR TB)** – Participants will hear the latest information about the epidemiology of TB; discuss the potential impact of M/XDR TB, and the need for better tests and treatment.
- **Novel Strategies for Resistance Testing in TB:** Participants will understand the advantages and drawbacks of M/XDR TB testing, provide an update on process for policy guidance and adoption of new M/XDR TB diagnostics, and discuss how molecular diagnostics may revolutionize the diagnosis of this disease.

All educational sessions, clinical vignettes and symposia are open to media. The Annual Conference is organized by the Association of Medical Microbiology and Infectious Disease Canada (www.ammi.ca) and the Canadian Association for Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (www.cacmid.ca).

Facts About Tuberculosis

- Tuberculosis, a respiratory illness spread by coughing and sneezing, is the world's deadliest curable infectious disease.
- Today, about one third of the world's population is infected by TB.
- The World Health Organization estimates that more than 1.7 million people die from TB every year.
- TB and HIV are a deadly duo: each speeds up the progress of the other.
- One third of people who are HIV positive are co-infected with TB; approximately 70 per cent of people with TB are also HIV positive.

- The fall in human TB deaths that started with the drug discoveries in the 1940s leveled off in the late 1980s. However, the number of people dying from this disease in developed countries is no longer going down.
- Canada has a better track record in the fight against TB than countries with less aggressive health care systems in place.
- WHO's new Global Plan to STOP TB 2006–2015 will expand access to high-quality TB diagnosis and treatment for all, treating 50 million people for TB and putting three million TB patients co-infected with HIV onto antiretrovirals. The program also aims at producing the first new anti-TB drug in 40 years by 2010, and developing a new vaccine by 2015, saving an additional 14 million lives.

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For more information about the AMMI Canada - CACMID Annual Conference 2008 go to www.ammi.ca/annual_conference.

To pre-register for the Conference or to request an interview, please contact:

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