

## **Ireland's \$11.3 Million Grant Boosts Fight Against TB**

Funding for TB Alliance Comes as Growing Threat of Drug Resistant TB Prompts Calls for Increased Investment in Development of New Drugs

**NEW YORK (Oct. 12, 2006)** – The Global Alliance for TB Drug Development (TB Alliance) announced today that it has received \$11.3 million (€9 million) from the Government of Ireland to further the substantial progress being made in developing new TB drugs – to combat a disease that kills two million people each year.

The grant comes as world health authorities express mounting concern over the emerging global health threat of multiple and extremely drug resistant strains of tuberculosis, against which today's drugs are increasingly powerless.

The grant is the second round of support this year from the Irish, who previously gave the TB Alliance \$360,512 (€300,000) to accelerate research and development.

"We are grateful to the Irish government for helping accelerate our progress in finding faster, more effective anti-TB drugs," said Dr. Maria C. Freire, CEO and President of the TB Alliance. "The additional funding is truly opportune as the growing global concern over TB reinforces the need for increased investment in new tools to control TB."

The TB Alliance is leading the development of the first, most comprehensive portfolio of TB drug candidates in decades, and is accelerating discovery, preclinical and clinical research of known and novel classes of antibiotics, to shorten and simplify treatments for tuberculosis. Today's TB drugs were originally developed and approved in the 1960s; they require 6-9 months of treatment, hindering TB control, and helping to fuel deadly drug-resistant strains.

TB poses a triple threat to global health, through its rapid spread of infection, the frightening rise in drug resistant strains, and its dangerous interaction with HIV. Until the creation of the TB Alliance in 2000, research and development advances were hampered by lack of market incentives, scientific challenges and the idea that TB was a disease of the past.

The \$11.3 million will be used over three years to push forward on a variety of fronts, including the completion of two global clinical trials now underway of drugs that could help cut lengthy treatment times by half in the next few years.

"We need more governments to follow the example set by Ireland and provide the critical funding needed to find, develop and provide access to new treatments to help better cure TB and deal with the growing threats of drug resistance and HIV/TB co-infection," Freire said.

### **About the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development**

The Global Alliance for TB Drug Development (TB Alliance) is a not-for-profit, product development partnership accelerating the discovery and/or development of affordable, new, anti-TB drugs that will shorten treatment, be effective against drug resistant strains, are appropriate for patients with HIV-TB co-infection, and improve treatment of latent infection. Working with public and private partners world wide, it is



leading the development of the first, most comprehensive portfolio of TB drug candidates in decades. The TB Alliance operates with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS), and Irish Aid. For more information on TB Drug Development and the TB Alliance, please visit [www.tballiance.org](http://www.tballiance.org).

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