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January 30, 2025

**To the President of the United States of America,
His Excellency Donald J. Trump**

Dear Mr. President,

We, representatives of communities affected by tuberculosis (TB), are writing to express our deep concern regarding the decision to suspend foreign assistance programs for 90 days. While we understand the importance of ensuring transparency and efficiency in the use of resources, even a temporary suspension of funding could have devastating consequences for millions of people worldwide and undermine the resilience of local communities that are at the forefront of combating TB.

TB is the deadliest infectious disease and remains one of the most serious threats to global health. Every year, it claims approximately 1.25 million lives, including more than 520 children each day. The United States has played a pivotal role in the fight against this disease, providing essential support through USAID and other mechanisms. These efforts have enabled millions to access timely prevention, treatment, diagnosis, care and support.

The suspension of USAID programs threatens not only to worsen the epidemiological situation but also to create severe socio-economic challenges, including:

1. Continuity of community-led initiatives. Essential efforts such as the monitoring, training and support of healthcare workers, diagnostic networks, drug stocks and grassroots groups of TB champions are key to early detection, treatment, and prevention. They are also key to increase political attention and domestic investments in TB. Disruption of these programs weakens community-level engagement and undermines the impact and sustainability of the TB response.

2. Trust in healthcare systems. Communities act as the bridge between governments and patients, ensuring people can access the care they need. Halting these programs risks eroding trust and reducing service coverage, particularly in remote and hard to reach regions.

3. Social resilience. Community-led initiatives supported by USAID provide vital assistance to patients and their families, addressing not only the medical but also the social consequences of TB, such as income loss, nutritional support, and stigma reduction.

4. Education and outreach. Community programs are essential in raising awareness about TB symptoms, prevention, and available services. This is critical for preventing new cases and controlling the spread of the disease.

5. Demand creation for TB tools. The private sector has many innovations including drugs and diagnostics that can help us to end TB. Communities lead the demand generation efforts to ensure uptake of these innovations.

The United States has shown that the approach of investing in people affected by TB and local community organizations delivers significant results in combating TB, strengthening health outcomes, and promoting sustainable national health responses. Your leadership and continued support for these programs demonstrate to the world that the U.S. remains a beacon of effectiveness, compassion, and foresight. It would also be a significant opportunity for a legacy agenda – of being the administration that ended TB once and for all.

We sincerely hope that you will reconsider the decision to suspend USAID funding for TB programs. Doing so will save lives, sustain communities that are on the frontlines of the fight against TB, and ensure access to the quality healthcare for everyone in need.

Sincerely,

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