Preparation for high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on ending TB

On behalf of the Global Health Council, supported by its member the Infectious Diseases Society of America, we commend WHO efforts for the high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on ending tuberculosis. Representing more than 11,000 infectious disease physicians and scientists, IDSA recognizes the urgent need to scale-up TB detection, treatment and prevention. IDSA views as a priority the development of strong, evidence-based policies and political commitments to end the TB epidemic. We call on the WHO to engage in robust consultation with civil society while preparing for the HLM and developing a political declaration based on equity and medical science, particularly with ID physicians and scientists who are on the front lines of the global TB response.

Ending TB as a global public health threat is imperative for addressing other ID issues, including the HIV epidemic and antimicrobial resistance. We applaud language in the Moscow Declaration to End TB calling for the WHO and other UN agencies to support full implementation the Global Action Plan on AMR. As the leading cause of drug resistance-related deaths globally, and the only airborne drug-resistant disease, tuberculosis and the global AMR crisis are inextricably linked. The global AMR agenda is central to addressing TB, and all efforts must be made to end drug resistant TB as a global health security threat. Any political declaration resulting from the HLM must include commitments to strengthening TB R&D, particularly the development of new and effective vaccines, which are also imperative for the global AMR response.

IDSA urges the WHO to expand TB treatment accessibility and address factors that lead to catastrophic costs for patients. As ID physicians, we will continue to advocate for strong U.S. commitments and increased funding. We also call on other high-income countries to increase their contributions to end the epidemic.