

Ashgabat, February 25, 2025 – Amid the increasing global burden of tuberculosis (TB), which continues to pose a threat to a public health, Turkmenistan is taking decisive steps to solidify its progress in combating this disease.

A technical advisory mission from the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe was welcomed in Turkmenistan on 24 February 2025. The five-day mission was led by Dr. Askar Yedilbayev, WHO/Europe Regional Advisor for TB/DR-TB and accompanied by WHO/Europe expert Dr. Mikhail Volik. The mission aimed to present the results of the National TB Control Program review (NTP) for 2021-2025 and lay the groundwork for a new National Strategic Plan of Turkmenistan on TB Control for 2026-2030.



The mission began with a meeting hosted by the WHO CO in Turkmenistan to present the findings of the NTP (2021-2025) review, which was conducted in 2024 by a team of experts from the WHO/Europe led by Dr. Askar Yedilbayev. Additionally, a draft roadmap for the development of a new strategic plan for TB control in Turkmenistan for the period 2026-2030 was presented by Dr. Mikhail Volik, WHO/Europe consultant. This session

brought together representatives from the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan, State Medical University of Turkmenistan named after Myrat Garryev, Directorate of Infectious Disease Centers, medical institutions of Ashgabat and Ahal velayat, National Red Crescent Society of Turkmenistan, Country Coordinating Committee of Turkmenistan, as well as mission members and UN agencies.

A central component of the mission was a meeting of the WHO team and the Minister of Health of Turkmenistan. During the meeting Dr. Askar Yedilbayev presented a summary of the NTP review findings, highlighting the goals and priority areas for the new National Strategic Plan, and emphasized Turkmenistan's commitment to the initiative led by Dr. Hans Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe "TB free Central Asia". Additionally, the meeting explored opportunities for Turkmenistan to share its best practices in TB control with other countries in the European Region, contributing to the global goal of ending the TB epidemic by 2030.

Further, the mission team together with the representatives of the NTP conducted assessment of the progress made under the current plan (2021-2025). Discussions centered on defining key strategic directions, activities, as well as targets for 2026-2030. A preliminary assessment of financing and technical support needs was also conducted, paving the way for the development of a draft action plan.

To strengthen Turkmenistan's capacity in the fight against TB at the country level is the primary goal of the WHO/Europe mission. The WHO and the Government of Turkmenistan will continue to work hand-in-hand to contribute to reducing the burden of TB in the region.