

We recognize that the tuberculosis emergency in Barents region is much more than a health concern. It is a symptom of complex socioeconomic problem that impedes human development, and cannot be defeated by the health sector acting alone. Confronting tuberculosis requires collaboration across government sectors and action across society. Expanded actions must be underpinned by rigorously tested technical strategies.

We note that, despite some achievements over the past decade, TB control and efforts towards elimination of the disease in the Region need to be improved. Throughout the Region, the presence of TB is often related to social and economic factors and migration causing reduced access to diagnosis and treatment and increased transmission. Poor adherence to accepted TB control practices has created high levels of manmade multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) and almost incurable extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB). Countries in the Region face a shortage of competent and motivated human resources for TB control. In the Region, TB is the most prevalent cause of illness and mortality in people living with HIV/AIDS, and few countries address TB/HIV confection in a comprehensive manner.

We hereby reaffirm our commitment as contained in the Kirkenes Declaration of 2003 and agree on the following priorities with the aim of achieving the 2015 target related to TB within the Millennium Development goals:

- Greater partnership and cooperation between the Russian Federation and Northern European countries in prevention and treatment of tuberculosis
- Promoting greater collaboration and coordination across the health, penitentiary and social services sectors.
- Improved Capacities of TB Control Facilities and Institutions. Civil society and affected communities considered as essential partners in and integrated into TB control.
- Introduction of earlier/timely and more accurate diagnostics of TB, and MDR TB and TB/HIV. Update of guidelines, standards and development of more effective TB infectious control programs for the Barents region.
- TB and HIV prevention, testing (especially in vulnerable groups) treatment and care programmes should work in close collaboration, and services should be integrated, as the two diseases together represent a deadly combination that is more destructive than either disease alone