

2010: The Year of the Lung Declaration

6 December 2009, Cancún, Mexico

We, the Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS), convening at the 40th Union World Conference on Lung Health in Cancún, Mexico on 6 December 2009, recognize that hundreds of millions of people around the world suffer each year from treatable and preventable chronic respiratory disease; acknowledge that lung health has long been neglected in public discourse; understand the need to unify different health advocates behind one purpose; express the urgency for increased awareness and action on lung health. . . and therefore declare 2010: The Year of the Lung.

WE NOTE WITH GRAVE CONCERN THAT:

Hundreds of millions of people struggle each year for life and breath due to lung diseases, including tuberculosis, asthma, pneumonia, influenza, lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, and more than 10 million die.

Chronic respiratory diseases cause approximately 7% of all deaths worldwide and represent 4% of the global burden of disease;

Lung diseases afflict people in every country and every socioeconomic group, but take the heaviest toll on the poor, the old, the young and the weak;

Deadly synergies exist between diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, influenza and asthma, COPD and lung cancer;

Diseases once primarily found in industrialized countries, such as asthma, COPD and lung cancer, are now major problems in low- and middle-income countries and threaten to overwhelm public health services;

The cost of lung disease runs to billions of dollars each year in lost productivity and increased health care expenses – to say nothing of diminished and ruined lives;

Yet public demand and political commitment remain inadequate to effect significant change.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT:

The connection between breath and life is fundamental, yet the evidence shows that lung health is not high on the public health agenda:

Tobacco use remains legal, although it kills more than 5 million people each year, including 1.3 million who die of lung cancer, and it affects the health of hundreds of thousands of others who are exposed to its effects secondhand;

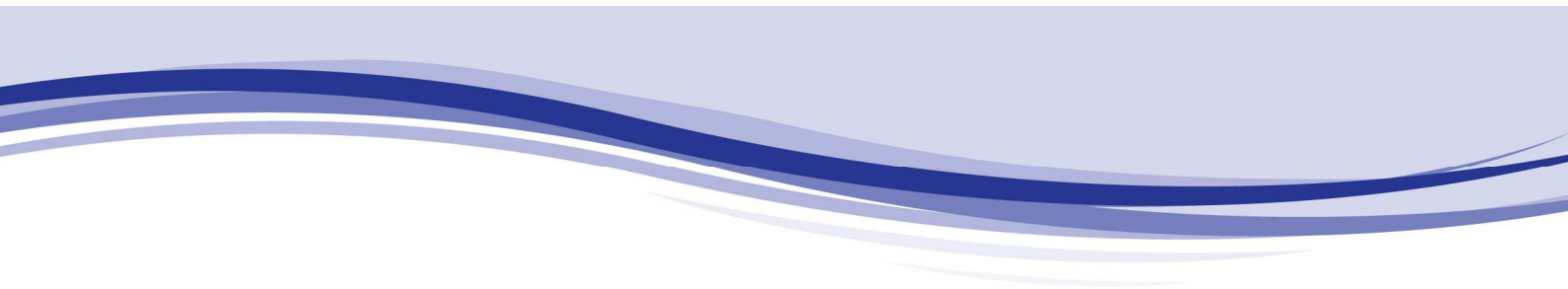
No new drugs have been developed for tuberculosis in more than 5 decades and the only vaccine is nearly a century old, yet there were more than 9 million new cases in 2007, and this curable disease kills 1.7 million each year;

Pneumonia kills more than 2 million children under 5 each year – one child every 15 seconds -- despite the fact that it can be treated effectively and inexpensively;

Most of the 250,000 deaths from asthma each year can be attributed to lack of proper treatment.

Although it will be the 3rd leading cause of death worldwide by 2020, COPD is frequently not diagnosed;

Nearly half of the world's population lives in or near areas with poor air quality.



IN THIS YEAR OF THE LUNG 2010, WE CALL UPON OUR PARTNERS

To offer widespread support to the more than 160 nations that have ratified the first-ever international public health treaty – the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control – and call upon the remaining countries to do so;

To demand increased research funding to develop tools and treatments ranging from new diagnostics to new vaccines and medicines;

To strengthen health systems and work towards the fair and equitable distribution of these health care resources to all who need them;

To lobby for improved legislation protecting the quality of the air we all breathe;

To ensure that every health worker, parent, child, teacher, employer, religious leader, community leader, media representative and government official understands the risks and symptoms of lung diseases and how to keep lungs healthy, because lung health is essential to breath and life.

ABOUT 2010: THE YEAR OF THE LUNG

2010: THE YEAR OF THE LUNG IS A MULTIFACETED CAMPAIGN THAT AIMS TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF LUNG HEALTH, GENERATE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR PREVENTING AND TREATING LUNG DISEASE AND ENCOURAGING INCREASED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING FOR LUNG DISEASE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT. THE CAMPAIGN WAS CONVENED BY A COALITION OF LUNG HEALTH ADVOCATES WHO RECOGNIZE THAT THE LUNGS HAVE BEEN NEGLECTED TOO LONG IN PUBLIC DISCOURSE. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON *2010: THE YEAR OF THE LUNG*, PLEASE VISIT WWW.2010YEAROFTHELUNG.ORG.