

PM calls on G20 leaders to step up the fight against deadly diseases

Theresa May will call on leaders of the world's largest economies to follow the UK in providing the funding that is urgently needed to fight AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.

At the G20 Summit in Osaka the Prime Minister will announce new UK support to the Global Fund to help the organisation save 16 million lives, prevent millions more people becoming infected, and drive forward efforts to tackle these deadly epidemics.

Averaging £467 million a year, the UK's new three-year funding pledge will help the Global Fund provide medication for over 3 million people living with HIV, treatment and care for over 2 million people suffering from tuberculosis, and 90 million mosquito nets to protect children and families from malaria.

This new funding from the aid budget builds on the UK's leading role in supporting the work of the Global Fund and in strengthening countries' health systems and promoting global health security as part of our international development effort.

Since 2002 the work of the Global Fund has helped save more than 27 million lives in over 100 countries and has helped cut the number of deaths from these deadly diseases by more than a third.

But the diseases continue to have a devastating impact, claiming 2.5 million lives around the world in 2017, with the challenge of drug and insecticide resistance undermining work to tackle these epidemics.

A child still dies from malaria every two minutes and every day nearly 1,000 adolescent girls and young women across Africa get infected with HIV. Tuberculosis is one of the top ten causes of death worldwide, and the number one cause of death from an infectious disease.

Ahead of October's replenishment conference in Lyon the Global Fund says it needs to raise another £11 billion in order to get international efforts to fight these diseases back on track.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

We need urgent international action and a truly collective response if we are to tackle threats to global health security, prevent infections spreading across borders, and halt the continued spread of deadly diseases.

Today I am calling on G20 countries to follow the UK's lead in supporting the vital work of the Global Fund and its relentless

efforts to tackle AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis around the world.

Not only do these diseases cause untold suffering to those who fall ill, they hold back whole countries' development.

I am deeply proud of the leading role the UK plays in international development and the life-saving impact of our aid spending.

The pledge we are making today will save millions of lives and help to build a healthier and more prosperous world – and that is firmly in our national interest

Bill Gates, co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:

Infections and deaths from diseases like AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, rotavirus and pneumonia have declined more than anyone thought possible 20 years ago. Much of this progress is owed to the funding and health products provided by organizations like the Global Fund, which the UK helped create, and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

But the job is not yet finished, and continued progress is not guaranteed. Today's commitment by the people of the UK via the Global Fund is a positive step forward in the global fight against these diseases, and will help to save millions of lives.

Founder of the Elton John Aids Foundation, Sir Elton John said:

Last week in Paris President Macron and I called on the world to support Replenishment of the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria. It is with profound respect that I thank the UK government for today's historic pledge to help do just that.

This sets an extraordinary example for others to follow and shows that in the matter of saving millions of lives and eradicating some of the world's greatest killer diseases there is a shared vision and commitment to reach Global Goal 3.

International Development Secretary, Rory Stewart said:

We're deeply proud of our efforts with the Global Fund to tackle AIDS, TB and malaria, but far too many people still die from these diseases.

We're going to continue to invest in controlling and ultimately ending these diseases, and we will be making sure other countries

contribute generously.

These diseases cross borders. Therefore our support is something that helps the poorest people in the world but is also something that keeps us safe here at home.

The Global Fund has set targets for private sector investment in its latest replenishment drive. The UK Government will use a proportion of its new investment to encourage the private sector to support efforts to fight malaria by doubling the value of up to £100 million of their contributions to the Global Fund to tackle this disease.

British expertise is at the heart of global efforts to tackle these diseases, including UK company ViiV Healthcare in Hertfordshire who have developed a new antiretroviral drug to treat HIV. ViiV is voluntarily licencing the drug which means the Global Fund can negotiate low prices and buy the drug in large volumes to improve the lives of children and adults with HIV in developing countries.