



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

**To:** Editors & Health Journalists

**Issued by:** Department of Health and Harmony Gold Mine

**Date:** Wednesday, 25 March 2026

### **South Africa accelerates TB screening and diagnosis with new technologies**

**Johannesburg:** The Department of Health in collaboration with the Harmony Gold Mining Company, Minerals Council South Africa and the Stop TB Partnership will on Thursday, 26 March attempt to achieve the Guinness Book of Records entry for conducting TB screening, using ultra-portable X-ray technology, about 4000 meters below the surface at the world's deepest mine located in Carletonville.

The initiative is part of the country's ongoing efforts and commitment by government working with the mining sector and other stakeholders to accelerate TB screening and diagnosis to end TB as a public health challenge by the year 2035. TB affects almost 11 million people each year globally, and despite being curable with an inexpensive antibiotic treatment, TB kills more people than any other single infectious disease. The main driver of the high mortality rate of TB is that every year, about 2.5 million people develop TB but are not diagnosed and treated.

In South Africa about 249,000 people fall ill with TB annually, and one quarter of them (62 250) do not get diagnosed and treated. The Global TB report published in November 2025 shows that in 2024 we detected 74 % of the 249,000 persons. Our gap as a country is now 26%. Thus, to detect the undiagnosed percentage of people with TB, technology including the chest X-rays (CXR) are needed. It is for this reason that, the mining sector in South Africa has made substantive investments in TB prevention and control which has resulted in significant declines in TB incidence.

The evolution of X-ray technology has progressed from analogue to digital systems, with further advancements leading to mobile and ultra-portable solutions. Thus, Ultra-portable X-ray systems offer significant advantages in terms of mobility, accessibility, and reduced radiation exposure.

A few years ago, Stop TB Partnership took a portable machine above Everest Base Camp as part of an attempt to set a Guinness World record with the X-ray taken at the highest elevation at the summit of Kala Patthar at 5,644m.

The Minister of Health, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi together with the Chief Executive Officer of Stop TB Partnership, Dr Lucica Ditiu and the executives from the Harmony Gold Mine and Minerals Council South Africa will attend this historic event to revolutionise the response to this deadly, yet preventable diseases. This day will commence with a team of health professionals going down the deepest shaft on earth to conduct live TB chest X-ray screening. The exercise is also part of mandatory screening as per the

Mine Health and Safety legislation which recommends that employees, especially those vulnerable to silica dust, to undergo annual medical screening.

**Members of the media are invited to attend the event scheduled as follows:**

**Date:** Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Time:** 12h00

**Venue:** Mponeng Mine, operated by Harmony Gold Mining Company, No 955  
Park Ave, West Wits, Carletonville

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