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International Workshop on Tuberculosis Vaccines: May 13–17, 2007, Varadero, Matanzas, Cuba

Introduction

The International Workshop on Tuberculosis Vaccines (TBVaccines 07), organized by the Cuban Society of Pneumology took place at the Iberostar Playa Alameda Hotel, Varadero, Cuba on May 13–17, 2007.

As in the International Workshop on Tuberculosis Vaccines held in Varadero, Cuba on May 8–12, 2005¹ to which a special issue of this journal was devoted (Tuberculosis, Vol 86, numbers 3–4, May–July 2006), the objective of the meeting was to establish a forum for debate, exchange and discussion related to the development of a new generation of vaccines for the control of human and veterinary tuberculosis as well as to identify areas of common interest to implement international collaborations in this field.

In this new version of the meeting there was a parallel, simultaneous and interactive workshop (TBart 07) where artists met, exchanged ideas and worked together in order to help with their message in the fight against tuberculosis.

The meeting involved 102 delegates from different countries (Canada, Cuba, Denmark, Slovakia, Spain, Israel, UK, France, Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, South Africa) and international organizations (UNICEF and FAO) and included plenary sessions, an ethical symposium, a poster session and an interactive session for the discussion and implementation of collaborative projects.

Opening session

The Opening Lectures were an overview of TB vaccine research in Cuba (Dr. Armando Acosta) and a presentation by Dr. Herve Bercovier about the use of new adjuvants in tuberculosis vaccine development.

During the *First Plenary* there was an overview of the animal models for pre-clinical evaluation with their advantages and drawbacks. Chairman: Dr. H. Bercovier. Co-Chairwoman: Dr. RL Solis. Participants: Dr. G Kaplan.

The *Second Plenary* was devoted to strategies using live attenuated vectors for the production of experimental vaccines. Chairman: Dr. R Hernandez Pando. Co-Chairman: Dr. E Montoro. Participants: Dr. J Dietrich, Dr. C Martin, Dr. Z Xing, and Dr. MA Alvarez.

Plenary Session 3 discussed aspects of latent tuberculosis, including animal models and potential strategies to combat Multidrug Resistant Strains. Chairman: Dr. G Rook. Co-Chairman: Dr. PJ Cardona. Participants: Dr. C Loch, Dr. PJ Cardona, Dr. R Hernandez Pando, and Dr. G Rook.

Plenary Session 4 analyzed different immunological evaluations in humans and the correlates of protection available for the evaluation of new vaccines in the field. Chairman: Dr. G Kaplan. Co-Chairman: Dr. W Hannekom. Participants: Dr. G Kaplan, and Dr. W Hannekom.

Plenary Session 5 was devoted to the role of specific antibodies in protection. Chairman: Dr. J Ivanyi. Co-Chairwoman: Dr. M Gennaro. Participants: Dr. J Ivanyi, Dr. M Gennaro, Dr. B Walker, and Dr. F Mascart.

Important aspects of bovine tuberculosis and its control were discussed in *Plenary Session 6* that closed with a presentation concerning the influence of the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* genotype on the immune response elicited. Chairman: Dr. W Amanfu. Co-Chairman: Dr. Z Xing. Participants: Dr. W Amanfu, Dr. J Berrada, Dr. DB Young, Dr. S Stenger, and Dr. R Chacon.

Ethical sessions

The ethical aspects were analyzed in 2 sessions, one of them related to the ethical aspects of tuberculosis vaccine development and the other session devoted to the link between art and science and the potential for the incorporation of art in the fight against tuberculosis.

Ethical aspects of tuberculosis vaccine development

There was an ethical session related to key aspects of tuberculosis vaccine development and its evaluation and introduction in human populations, mainly related with the poor areas of the world. Chairman: Dr. DB Young. Co-Chairman: Dr. B Walker. Participants: Mr. Jose Juan Ortiz (UNICEF), Dr. H Mohamed, Dr. B Walker, and Dr. G Rook.

Art/science session

There was a join art/science session where the artists presented lectures and explained the development of TBart07 activities. Chairman: Mr. JJ Ortiz. Co-Chairwoman: Dr. Odalys Rodriguez.

There was a lecture Dr. Jorge R. Bermúdez about the historical relationship between art and medicine. Jenny White, representative of the British Council in Cuba outlined the ways in which art can help health programmes by increasing awareness, improving environments, and exploring ideas. In the last lecture artists Anne Rook and Stephen Williams talked about TBart07 and the vision of the artists on the link between art and science.

TBart07

The background brief was that by increasing social awareness artists can enhance the application of existing medical tools, and so save lives. Moreover artists can focus attention on the need to support development of a new generation of vaccines, one of the most important elements for the future control of the disease.

This artistic activity had different components:

Pre-workshop activities:

- Artists from different countries contributed images to constitute a printed collection. The images were combined with messages relating to different aspects of tuberculosis (stigma, discrimination, poverty, women, children, prisons, immigration, AIDS, hunger, multidrug resistance, etc)².

- Educational material for children relating to tuberculosis and its control (Lidia Sarmiento) (Figure 1).

In situ activities

- A collection of artworks made on X-ray films relating to tuberculosis (Alfredo Sosabravo, Alain Pino, Agustín Bejarano, Aziyadé Ruiz, Alicia Leal, Angel Ramirez, Franklin Sotolongo, Isabel Santos, Lesbia Vent Dumois, Nelson Dominguez, Alexis Leiva, José Fuster, Lidia Sarmiento, Antonio Martinez Estopiñan) (Figure 2).
- Photographers (Ivo Saglietti and Puschner) exhibited two collections of photos taken in endemic areas with high incidence.
- In situ works by a group of artists from different countries (Figures 3 and 4). They made collective works on canvas (Agustin Bejarano, Aziyadé Ruiz, Angel Ramirez, Alain Pino, Jo Dietrich, Kate Honey, Jorge R. Bermúdez), sculptures (Reinaldo Ortega). Another group constructed an installation (Anne Rook, Joan Tilburn, Kate Honey, Jorge A. R. Subirats) within which dancer Yusimí Diaz Suarez made a performance. "Anne Rook collected the responses of tourists, artists and hotel staff to questions about TB. Their lack of knowledge, their concern or their prejudices were charted on 2 posters placed amongst the scientific posters". Stephen Williams used objects around the building to make work relating to tuberculosis. Antonio Martinez Estopiñan created a mural.
- A session in which the artists gave talks to explain their artistic activities to the scientists.
- A piano performance in this later session by participating scientist (Dr. Miliana Chuckova) who played Chopin.

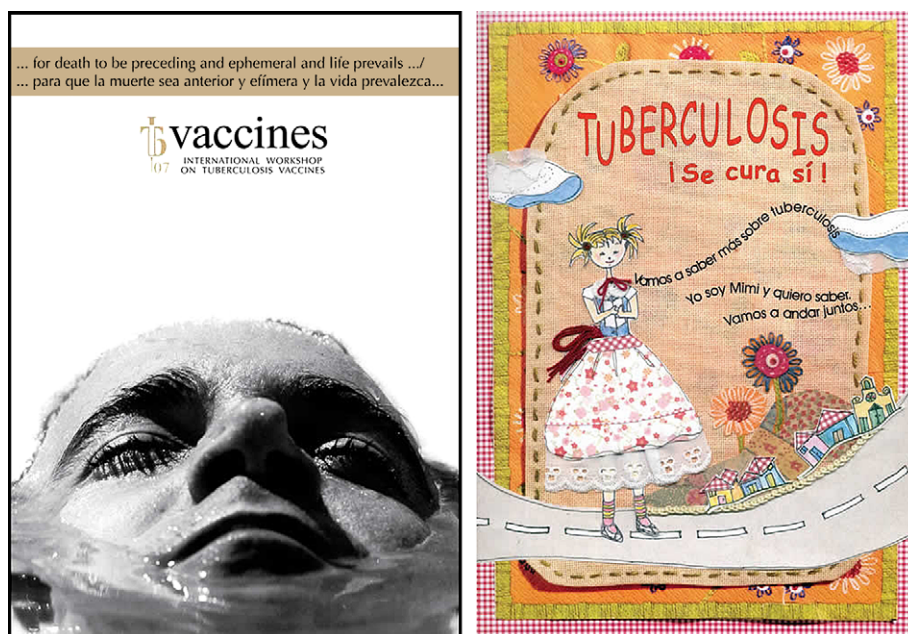


Figure 1 Printed materials. To promote the spreading of information, educational material was printed specifically for children. "La Tuberculosis ¡Se cura!" (Tuberculosis ¡can be cured!) (right) and the collection of cards "...for death to be preceding and ephemeral and life prevails..." (left) where the main topics relating to tuberculosis (hunger, stigma, women, children, prisons, etc) are combined with artworks from contemporary artists.

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