

ITM gathers experts to tackle future health challenges

60th ITM Colloquium kicks off today

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Dit is de omschrijving

During the anniversary edition of the Colloquium of the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) on 9 and 10 October we connect the dots between the most pressing issues in tropical medicine and international health. The impact of climate change, globalisation and migration on future health challenges is the central theme of the conference. Her Majesty the Queen of the Belgians will open the Colloquium. The outgoing director, Prof Dr Bruno Gryseels, will give his valedictory address in the afternoon, followed by the first speech of the newly appointed director, Dr Marc-Alain Widdowson. More than 450 researchers and policymakers of nearly seventy different nationalities participate in the conference, which is moderated by Dalilla Hermans.

What will our health challenges be in a world that is changing faster than ever due to factors such as globalisation, migration and global warming? Despite the scientific progress we have been making, new epidemics are emerging, vectors are spreading at a rapid pace and non-communicable diseases are on the rise worldwide. How do we work towards achieving health for all? Over the course of two days, experts gather in Antwerp to connect and discuss how to meet these challenges. "During the 60th Colloquium we bring together policy makers and scientists with various areas of expertise. The challenges that await us require an interdisciplinary approach, like a potluck dinner where the combination of various dishes make for a nourishing meal", says Prof Dr Bouke De Jong, chair of the conference's scientific committee. During the Colloquium, participants also discuss how technology and innovation can serve as allies in achieving health for all.

Prof Dr Bruno Gryseels was ITM's director for over twenty years. During the Colloquium he will officially pass the torch to the new director, Dr Marc-Alain Widdowson. Going forward, Marc-Alain Widdowson plans to strengthen the Institute's core activities, while continuing to evolve and innovate to guarantee the Institute's strong impact on international health. "We will reinforce the work that has built ITM's reputation and especially look to expand partnerships. We have seen tremendous progress in global public health, like in childhood mortality, but we must work on finding solutions to new challenges. Think of the emergence of antibiotic resistance, or global warming and the spread of vectors capable of spreading disease."

Since 1959, the Colloquium is ITM's yearly flagship scientific conference, funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation. ITM colloquia bring together thousands of experts from different regions of the world to discuss the most pressing scientific questions in tropical medicine and international health.