



# FCTC

WHO FRAMEWORK CONVENTION  
ON TOBACCO CONTROL

ISSUE 2, June 2009

## Status of the Convention

<b>Number of Parties :</b> (as of 15 June 2009)	<b>165</b>
<b>New ratifications :</b> (1 April - 15 June 2009)	<b>1</b> (Sierra Leone)
<b>New entry into force :</b> (1 April - 30 June 2009)	<b>2</b> (Republic of Moldova, Gabon)

Regularly updated list of Parties: [http://www.who.int/fctc/signatories\\_parties](http://www.who.int/fctc/signatories_parties)

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## Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on a Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco products (INB) - highlights

### Third session

The third session of the INB is being held in Geneva, 28 June – 5 July 2009.

- Documentation: All documents related to the third session, including the revised Chairperson's text and expert reviews requested by the INB, are available online at: [http://www.who.int/fctc/inb/third\\_session\\_inb](http://www.who.int/fctc/inb/third_session_inb).
- Program of the INB: The guide for delegates, available on the same website, contains information on the working hours. In addition to this programme, lunchtime seminars are being organized focusing on matters related to the objective of the INB and decisions of the Conference of the Parties.

### Regional intersessional consultations

In line with decision FCTC/COP3(6) of the Conference of the Parties, regional intersessional consultation meetings were held before the INB3. The regional consultations provided a forum for exchange of views between the participating Parties on the revised Chairperson's text and the negotiating process. At the request of participants, the summaries of these consultations were made available at the start of the INB3.

The Convention Secretariat facilitated the regional intersessional consultations in cooperation with the host governments (Bangladesh, China, Iran and Mexico for the respective WHO regions) and

arranged for regional intersessional consultations for the European and African regions in Geneva, in cooperation with regional coordinators. Valuable support was received from the Regional Offices of WHO in the organization of these consultations.

The Secretariat also organized briefings for permanent missions of Parties based in Geneva in June 2009 according to their regional groups.

### Country assessment missions

The Chairperson of the INB requested the Convention Secretariat to assess, in selected countries, the technological and financial requirements which would be needed to implement an international track and trace system for tobacco products at the national level, with special focus on low resource environments.

Following this request, the assessment exercise took place in three countries: Bangladesh, Djibouti and Kenya. The expert team from the Convention Secretariat worked with national experts representing health and customs sectors and regulatory authorities, and other experts from areas such as economic, information technology and legal.

The summary of this assessment was presented at the INB3.

### Working groups established by the Conference of the Parties

Dates and locations for the next meetings of all currently mandated working groups are now set. The schedule of working group meetings can be found in the "Calendar of events" section below. The work of

key facilitators of the working groups is in progress, aiming at the preparation of draft outlines/proposals for future guidelines and recommendations. More information on working groups: [http://www.who.int/fctc/cop/working\\_groups](http://www.who.int/fctc/cop/working_groups)

**ERRATUM:** In the previous issue of "Convention News" Ghana has been erroneously omitted from the list of members of the working group on Article 17&18.

## Implementation news

### Reports of the Parties

Between 1 April and 15 June the Secretariat received reports on the implementation of the Convention from Bulgaria, Comoros, Egypt and Kazakhstan. All Party reports are available at: [http://www.who.int/fctc/reporting/party\\_reports](http://www.who.int/fctc/reporting/party_reports)

Overall, of the 145 Parties due to have reported by 15 June 2009, the Secretariat has received 113 reports so far (78%).

The Secretariat will prepare, based on national reports received by the end of June 2009, a progress report on the implementation of the Convention internationally. This report will be distributed to the Parties at the end of 2009.

### News from Parties

In **Bahrain**, on 20 April 2009 the King ratified a new, comprehensive tobacco control act after it was approved by the Parliament. The new law forbids the planting, manufacturing or reprocessing of tobacco in Bahrain as well as importing chewable tobacco-based products, moist snuff and other tobacco-based substances unlicensed by the health ministry. It also bans smoking in public places and in private cars carrying children. The law also forbids advertising and prohibits companies employed in cigarette manufacturing or importation from sponsoring sports events and the sale of cigarettes to people less than 18 years old. The law also calls for the establishment of an anti-smoking national committee under the health ministry. (For more information please contact Dr Kadhem J. Al-Halwaji, tobacco control focal point, Ministry of Health, at [KHalwaji@health.gov.bh](mailto:KHalwaji@health.gov.bh)).

On 15 May 2009, the Parliament in **Bulgaria** voted to ban smoking in all public spaces, therefore abolishing exemptions for smoke-free places that were in the law which entered into force on 1 January 2005. The new provisions will come into effect in June 2010. <http://dv.parliament.bg/DVWeb/index.faces> (For more information please contact Dr Masha Gavrilova, Head of Department, Public Health

Directorate, Ministry of Health, at [mgavrilova@mh.government.bg](mailto:mgavrilova@mh.government.bg)).

In **Croatia**, an earlier public smoking ban was extended to include bars and restaurants effective 6 May 2009. According to the law, smoking in bars will only be allowed on terraces, while restaurants can allocate a separate room for smokers, but food or drink will not be served in these areas. In Croatia smoking is already forbidden in health and education facilities. <http://uk.news.yahoo.com/18/20090505/thl-croatia-introduces-tough-anti-smokin-96993ab.html>

In **India**, pictorial warnings will be displayed on cigarette packets from 31 May 2009. The pictorial warning will occupy 40 per cent of front side of cigarette package. <http://www.newkerala.com/nkfullnews-1-33657.html>

In **Ireland**, the Department of Health & Children issued, on 20 May 2009, new guidelines for retailers selling tobacco products. The new guidelines call for a complete ban on point-of-sale advertising for tobacco products as of 1 July 2009. Retailers must also ensure that their tobacco products are stored out of view, within a closed container or dispenser only accessible by the retailer and retail staff. Retailers must display a sign at their premises informing the public that tobacco products may only be sold at those premises to persons aged 18 years. The guidelines also makes obligatory the registration of all retailers of tobacco products with the Office of Tobacco Control (OTC). For the full text of the guidelines please see the website of the issuing Department at [http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/tobacco\\_products\\_guidance.pdf?direct=1](http://www.dohc.ie/publications/pdf/tobacco_products_guidance.pdf?direct=1).

In **Kenya**, on 4 May 2009, the Public Health Ministry launched a Tobacco Control Board to advise the government on policies to regulate production, manufacture, sale, advertising, promotion and use of tobacco products. The Board is provided for in the Tobacco Control Act and its members include, inter alia, the Attorney General, the Director General of the National Environmental Management Authority and representatives of local authorities, the Law Society of Kenya and non-governmental organizations. The launch of the Board now opens the way for the Minister to issue relevant regulations covered by the Act. (Information from the Ministry of Health, Head of Department of Non-Communicable Diseases, [noncom@health.go.ke](mailto:noncom@health.go.ke))

In the **Libyan Arab Jamahiriya**, on 14 May 2009 the Government announced the banning of smoking in public places and also prohibits advertising of all tobacco products in the media. The decision announced by the Libyan cabinet also prohibits selling of cigarettes to any person less than 18 years old. Producing any kind of sweets that are shaped

like cigarettes is also forbidden as is manufacturing, importation and marketing of any product that carries names of tobacco products, such as clothes or shoes or toys. (For more details please contact Dr Mohamed Ibrahim Saleh, tobacco control focal point, Ministry of Health, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, at [msaleh@ltnet.net](mailto:msaleh@ltnet.net).)

In **Peru**, following a resolution of the Ministry of Health issued in January 2009, combined text and pictorial warnings will appear on cigarette packages by July 2009. The new warnings are expected to cover at least 50% of the front panel of the cigarette pack. (For more information please contact Dr Edgar A. Ramírez, representative AMRO/PAHO at [aramirez@paho.org](mailto:aramirez@paho.org).)

In **Tuvalu**, new legislation entered into force to ban smoking in all restaurants and licenses premises

servicing alcoholic beverages on 1 June 2009. The Tobacco Control Act 2008 already introduced a complete ban of smoking in all enclosed areas and public places last year. (For more information please contact tobacco control focal point Ms Avanoa Homasi at [mysabs@yahoo.com](mailto:mysabs@yahoo.com).)

In **Uruguay**, on 5 June 2009 the President signed a decree amending previous legislation concerning packaging and labeling of tobacco products. The new decree requires the size of health warnings to occupy 80% of principal display areas of packages of all tobacco products and to include both pictograms and textual messages. (For more details please contact Dr Winston Abascal ([wabascal@msp.gub.uy](mailto:wabascal@msp.gub.uy)) or Dr Ana Lorenzo ([alorenzo@msp.gub.uy](mailto:alorenzo@msp.gub.uy)) in the tobacco control unit of the Ministry of Health.)

### Views from Parties: Singapore (a multisectoral mechanism for tobacco control)

Article 4.4 of the WHO FCTC states that comprehensive multisectoral measures are essential to prevent the incidence of diseases and mortality due to tobacco use. Further, article 5.2 calls on each Party, in accordance with its capabilities, to establish or reinforce and finance a national coordinating mechanism for tobacco control. A multisectoral coordinating mechanism can be of different status. Singapore's experience provides evidence for the importance of establishing such a mechanism.

Singapore ratified the Convention on 14 May 2004 and established a Health Promotion Board under the Ministry of Health, which has been mandated to coordinate the National Smoking Control Programme and the activities implemented under this programme.

The Board is intersectoral in its composition, and this intersectoral approach is being cultivated in the activities which are developed under its umbrella. For example, it promotes the development of partnerships between healthcare professionals, managers of workplaces and educational institutions, communities and religious groups, which are then charged with offering counseling services on smoking cessation. It also conducts on-going formative research to better understand the needs of the different population groups, for the purpose of identifying groups at risk and developing tailored interventions.

The experience of Singapore indicates that a multisectoral board can become the centerpiece of efficient tobacco control efforts, particularly in light of the comprehensive action required for the implementation of the WHO FCTC. (Rachel Ngo, Senior Executive (Substance Abuse), Health Promotion Board, Government of Singapore)

### Secretariat news

#### Facilitating the sharing of license on pictorial warnings

On 15 April 2009, the Convention Secretariat sent a Note Verbale to Parties on sharing licenses for the use of pictorial warnings and the development of a central international database of pictorial health warnings and messages. Several Parties have already responded positively to this call. This will not only

facilitate the work concerning the implementation of the guidelines on Article 11 of the Convention, but also that of Article 22 concerning the transfer of expertise and technology.

Through the agreement signed earlier between the European Commission (EC) and the Convention Secretariat on sharing the licenses of the EC library of pictorial warnings with other Parties, the first agreement was concluded in June 2009 between the EC and Georgia.

## Meeting on the COP4 report on standardization and harmonization

On 2 June 2009 the Convention Secretariat organized a meeting of WHO experts as well as experts representing organizations which run international data collection initiatives related to tobacco use and control in WHO headquarters. The meeting was part of the process foreseen in the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its third session (FCTC/COP3(17)), which mandated the Secretariat to elaborate a report on measures to standardize tobacco-related data collected and harmonize data collection initiatives in this area.

## Re-launch of the website of the Convention Secretariat

The redesigned website of the Convention Secretariat,

with regularly updated information is now available in all official languages of the COP at <http://www.who.int/fctc>.

## Observers

Recent publications of Corporate Accountability International, supporting the implementation of guidelines on article 5.3 of the Convention, are now available. The booklet entitled "Protecting Against Tobacco Industry Interference: the 2008 Global Tobacco Treaty Action Guide" and a summary factsheet on the same matter can be accessed at <http://www.stopcorporateabuse.org/category/sitecategories/tobacco> (download resources) in English, French and Spanish.

## Calendar of events

Intergovernmental Negotiating Body		
28 June – 5 July 2009	International Conference Centre (CICG), Geneva, Switzerland	Third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on a Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products (INB3)
Working group meetings		
2–4 September 2009	Seoul, Republic of Korea	First meeting of the Working Group on Article 14
16–18 September 2009	New Delhi, India	First meeting of the Working Group on Articles 17 & 18
20–22 October 2009	Amman, Jordan	Sixth meeting of the Working Group on Articles 9 & 10
18–20 November 2009	Istanbul, Turkey	Second meeting of the Working Group on Article 12
Workshops on the implementation of WHO FCTC		
3–5 November 2009	Cairo, Egypt	For the Eastern Mediterranean Region
Workshops for the dissemination of COP guidelines		
(To be determined)	Singapore	For the Western Pacific Region and ASEAN countries

## Contact us

The principal email address of the Convention Secretariat is: [fctcsecretariat@who.int](mailto:fctcsecretariat@who.int). All messages sent to this address will be directed to respective officers for follow up.

For specific functions, the Secretariat also operates other generic email addresses as follows:

[conventionnews@who.int](mailto:conventionnews@who.int) - can be used when communicating on or providing input for the newsletter edited by the Convention Secretariat.

[copreporting@who.int](mailto:copreporting@who.int) - can be used for the submission of implementation reports of Parties or any enquiry related to reporting under the Convention.

[fctcpartnerships@who.int](mailto:fctcpartnerships@who.int) - can be used for questions related to technical assistance in the implementation of the Convention.

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