

Agenda item 6.4

Protection of public health policies with respect to tobacco control from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry

The Conference of the Parties (COP),

Recalling the need to be alert to any efforts by the tobacco industry to undermine or subvert tobacco control efforts and the need to be informed of activities of the tobacco industry that have a negative impact on implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC);

Noting with concern the aggressive and/or misleading tactics of the tobacco industry, and the utilization of global philanthropic approaches to finance or partner with health, scientific and economic networks and, consequently, undermine the Parties' obligations under Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC as well as the overall objectives of the Convention;

Noting that the global tobacco industry is a specialized oligopoly that controls the whole tobacco supply chain and often exploit the social and economic vulnerability of tobacco growers to create political alliances to undermine tobacco control policies in national and international levels;

Recognizing that the tobacco industry and those representing its interests have been attempting to associate themselves with United Nations agencies, initiatives and programmes, including in the area of addressing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and programmes to control noncommunicable diseases (NCDs);

Recalling that tobacco industry interference remains one of the greatest obstacles to the implementation of the Convention and undermines tobacco-control efforts at the global, regional and country levels, particularly exacerbating the challenges faced by developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

Acknowledging with appreciation the efforts of the Convention Secretariat in promoting the model policy on preventing tobacco industry interference among organizations of the United Nations system, complying with the WHO Framework of engagement with non-State actors, raising awareness along with WHO about the dangers posed and the need to reject partnership with the tobacco industry-funded organizations and initiatives, and the establishment of the Convention Secretariat's Knowledge Hub for Article 5.3, which has made available its technical resources and services to the Parties in promoting implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and its guidelines;

Recognizing the landmark resolutions adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2017 and 2018 to call organizations of the United Nations system not to accept funding from the tobacco industry and develop their own model policies, and noting with appreciation the delisting of the tobacco industry from the United Nations Global Compact as adopted by its Board in July 2017;

Noting with concern that some international intergovernmental organizations are continuing to receive funds from the tobacco industry;

Recognizing that the active participation of and partnership with civil society, as specified in the Preamble and in Article 4.7 of the WHO FCTC, is essential to the effective implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC,

1. ENCOURAGES Parties:

(a) to continuously monitor, in accordance with Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and its guidelines, tobacco industry activities in their respective jurisdictions;

(b) to strengthen, where necessary, their awareness-raising efforts about the tobacco industry or related third-party funding among research institutions, target government agencies, and pertinent international intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, and to consider adopting policies that would prevent the use of such institutions' research outputs in policy development;

(c) to foster international cooperation by requiring the tobacco industry to provide information on its activities such as research, marketing, lobbying including policy submissions, funding of third parties/nongovernmental organizations, and by making such information publicly accessible, in accordance with Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and its guidelines;

(d) to further enhance policy coherence within governments and require that all government sectors relevant to the implementation of the Convention, not only the health sector, comply with the requirements of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC, and reflect the same in positions put forward in different governing bodies of the United Nations system;

(e) to seek assistance on implementing Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and its guidelines from the Convention Secretariat's Knowledge Hub for Article 5.3, as appropriate, and utilize the resources made available by the same, including observatories;

(f) to promote, in international and regional organizations in which they are represented, as well as among non-State actors, particularly those working on SDGs and NCDs, the adoption of policies to prevent tobacco industry interference, reflecting the spirit of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC;

(g) to promote national and international cooperation to enhance implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC in relation to Articles 17, 18 and 19 of the WHO FCTC to reduce tobacco industry interference in tobacco control policies;

2. REQUESTS the Convention Secretariat:

(a) to develop and implement, with the support of the Convention Secretariat's Knowledge Hub for Article 5.3, as appropriate, a comprehensive communications plan aimed at raising awareness of tobacco-industry tactics and activities among international and regional government organizations as well as non-State actors, particularly those working on SDGs and NCDs, and in other international developmental initiatives/platforms;

(b) to set up, through or with support from the Convention Secretariat's Knowledge Hub for Article 5.3, a resource database comprising evidence based information, such as tobacco-industry policy submissions and funded groups, derived from the Parties and observatories and other evidence-based information from WHO and observers to the COP;

(c) to continue requiring observers to report on any activities that they carry out in the area of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and its guidelines, and take such reports into consideration in its evaluation of the eligibility of observers;

(d) to fully comply with its mandate as provided under decision FCTC/COP/7(11) and report on progress at the Ninth session of the COP;

(e) to report on the outcomes and progress made to the Ninth session of the COP as part of the report of the Convention Secretariat's activities;

3. INVITES the observers to the COP, in particular the international intergovernmental organizations and nongovernmental organizations, to also promote, as part of their work, policies to prevent tobacco industry interference, including with the Parties, organizations of the United Nations system and other forums, as appropriate.