

# Global Controls on Tobacco

FCTC BACKGROUNDER

SEPTEMBER 2001

## THIS TOBACCO TREATY COULD:

## A GLOBAL TOBACCO TREATY

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) is a global treaty currently being negotiated by governments through the World Health Assembly (WHA).

The FCTC will address transnational and trans-border dimensions of tobacco control, such as global advertising, smuggling and trade. It

will also serve as an important catalyst in strengthening national tobacco legislation and control programs.

The benefits of this treaty process are already being felt. Governments and citizens are mobilizing technical and financial support for tobacco control, and raising awareness among many govern-

ment ministries about tobacco issues.

If properly negotiated, the FCTC could help turn the tide against the tobacco industry by weakening its political power and helping to end its reckless behavior through regulation and legislation.

CONTROL CIGARETTE SMUGGLING

END TOBACCO ADVERTISING

MONITOR GLOBAL TOBACCO USE

HELP DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ESTABLISH TOBACCO CONTROL MEASURES

PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH FROM UNFAIR TRADE CHALLENGES

IMPROVE WARNINGS ON CIGARETTE PACKAGES

INCREASE RESEARCH TO REDUCE TOBACCO USE

STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR TOBACCO CONTROL

HOLD TOBACCO COMPANIES ACCOUNTABLE

## FCTC CHRONOLOGY:

- **September 1994:** *World Conference on Tobacco or Health calls for the development of a global tobacco treaty.*
- **May 1996** *World Health Assembly directs WHO to initiate FCTC.*
- **May 1999:** *World Health Assembly (WHA) resolution unanimously supports work towards the FCTC.*
- **1999–2000:** *WHO Working Group on the FCTC holds two meetings, drawing participants from 153 countries (representing 95% of the world's population).*
- **May 2000** *World Health Assembly resolution unanimously launches political negotiations towards FCTC.*
- **October 2000** *During first FCTC negotiation, governments agree to a workplan to negotiate the FCTC.*
- **February 2000** *A draft text for the treaty is circulated. Health Canada uses this text as the basis of its consultation with NGOs, unions, tobacco companies and other interested parties.*
- **May 2001.** *Second negotiation session took place, with governments presenting initial negotiating positions.*
- **November 2001** *Third negotiating session to take place.*
- **May 2003** *Anticipated adoption of FCTC by World Health Assembly.*

HOW CAN YOU HELP? SEE OVER.

## A GLOBAL TREATY FOR A GLOBALIZED PROBLEM

### The tobacco pandemic is moving to the developing world.

In wealthy nations, smoking rates are steadily, if slowly, declining and public health benefits are beginning to be felt as lung cancer rates begin to fall. But the tobacco pandemic has not been slowed; it has moved to more vulnerable places.

Already, thirty percent of the world's adults smoke. Increased population, together with increased smoking rates are expected to push the number of smokers from 1.1 billion to 1.6 billion within 25 years. At the current rate, tobacco-caused deaths exceed 1 billion in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (compared with 100 million in the 20th century).

New challenges in stopping the spread of tobacco use are associated with the phenomena of globalization, such as liberalized trade, economic integration, market domination of multinational corporation, new technologies, increased western marketing and increased foreign direct investment. Cigarettes are marketed as part of a western lifestyle, a powerful al-

lure to many in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

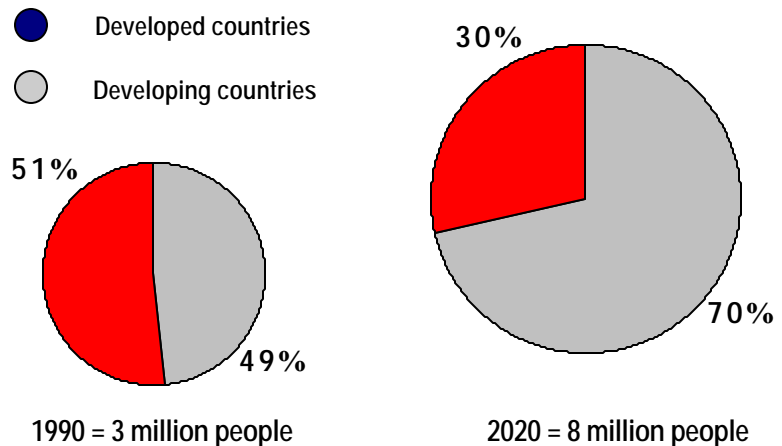
With the falling demand for cigarettes in the developed world, and an increasing demand in the developing world, cigarette companies have moved aggressively to establish new markets in the new economies.

A decade ago, only 50% of the world's market was open to international cigarette companies (many countries had

state tobacco monopolies). Today, multinational companies have access to virtually the whole world.

The entry of the multinational tobacco companies into these new markets has transformed the global tobacco market into a market increasingly for western brands (like Marlboro, Lucky Strike and Camel).

### PREDICTED TOBACCO DEATHS IN DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



## TOBACCO CRIPPLES DEVELOPING ECONOMIES

Poorer nations are poorly equipped to deal with either the health or economic consequences of smoking.

- ◆ The vast majority of smokers begin smoking while they are teenagers. Every day an estimated 100,000 children around the world become regular smokers.
- ◆ A recent survey coordinated by the World Health Organization found 1 in 10 children aged 13-15 living in a developing or transitional country was already a regular smoker.

- ◆ 250 million children alive today are predicted to die from smoking.
- ◆ In many parts of the world, the health consequences of smoking are poorly understood (70% of Chinese smokers recently reported that they thought smoking caused "little or no harm.")
- ◆ In wealthy nations, approximately 1% of the GDP is currently spent on treating the diseases caused by smoking, and available information indicates that proportion may be equally high in low-income countries.

- ◆ A World Bank study concluded that each tonne of tobacco smoked produces a net global loss of US \$27,000. The current economic drain totals about \$200 billion on the world's economy.
- ◆ Smoking is not only increasing in poorer nations, it is also increasingly concentrated among the poorer citizens in all countries. Once a 'habit' of the wealthy, smoking is becoming an addiction suffered by the world's most disadvantaged.

## TRANSBOUNDARY PROBLEMS NEED TRANSBOUNDARY SOLUTIONS

Canadian health associations active in supporting and developing the FCTC have made their priorities clear—we need an FCTC with strong and enforceable methods to deal with transboundary tobacco control problems.

Priority concerns are:

### TOBACCO ADVERTISING:

Countries with total and partial bans on advertising are unable to completely stop advertising that originates from beyond their borders. Tobacco advertising and sponsorship crosses international borders on television, in radio broadcasts, in newspapers and magazines and on the internet.

#### ◆ An FCTC Solution

Both those countries which have been able to implement total bans on tobacco advertising (such as France) and those countries with strong restrictions on tobacco advertising (such as Canada) would benefit from measures which eliminate advertising which crosses borders.

The FCTC can ensure that no country should be obliged to accept tobacco advertising from beyond its borders. The FCTC can ban domestic advertising as well as imports and exports of advertising, such as the broadcast of tobacco sponsored sporting events.

### INTERNATIONAL TRADE LAWS:

A recent report by World Bank and World Health Organization analysts concludes that “cigarette consumption is rising because of freer trade.”

Currently, there is no explicit exemption for tobacco control measures from international and regional trade agreements.

Many international trade agreements (e.g., GATT, TRIPS & NAFTA) can stand in the way of tobacco control measures, and often assist multinational companies in penetrating the markets of the developing world.

#### ◆ An FCTC Solution

In a rules-based global economy, we can have rules which protect public health. Member States a long time ago agreed to clearly and unambiguously exclude military equipment from international free trade agreements—the same can now be done for tobacco through the FCTC.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

Leadership in tobacco control comes from both the developing and developed world (Nations with advanced tobacco control programs include South Africa, Thailand, Brazil, New Zealand, Norway and Canada, for example).

#### An FCTC Solution

The FCTC should provide the means by which tobacco control technology can be transferred from the people and countries that have it to the people and countries that need it. This could be an international fund to finance the transfer of tobacco control technology and expertise, and an international register of people with tobacco control experience who are ready and willing to help others work towards stronger tobacco control.

### SMUGGLING:

Estimates are that about one-third of cigarettes in international commerce are smuggled, representing more than 7% of the global cigarette supply.

Cigarette smuggling undermines comprehensive public health measures, and deprives governments of tax revenue. Recent investigations have revealed that transnational tobacco companies are implicated in global smuggling operations.

#### ◆ An FCTC Solution

Measures needed to control tobacco smuggling, include:

- ◆ Heightened collaboration among law enforcement officials to bring tobacco smuggling under control.
- ◆ Ban on duty-free sales
- ◆ Mandatory licensing of all tobacco manufacturers and provision to require taxes to be paid before the tobacco products leave the factory in the country of manufacture.
- ◆ Obligation that all legal requirements for the labelling of tobacco products in the country of destination be met in the factory in the country of origin, before the tobacco products leave the factory.
- ◆ Obligation that all tobacco product packages in international trade bear standardized, coded information (such as tax-paid markings) that will facilitate monitoring, product tracking and global smuggling control. The form and content of the standardized, coded information will be as determined by the Convention Secretariat.
- ◆ Control on “chain-of-custody” to ensure that manufacturers and distributors not allow their products to fall into the hands of smugglers.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP:

### As a citizen you can:

- ✓ Join the Framework Convention Alliance
- ✓ Write your Member of Parliament, the Prime Minister and express your support for this treaty.
- ✓ Call us for more information on how you can help

### As an elected official you can:

- ✓ Write a letter to the Prime Minister endorsing the FCTC (and send us a copy).
- ✓ Introduce a motion or resolution supporting the FCTC in your legislature or council.
- ✓ Call us for more information on how you can help

### As a community, religious group, union or other citizens' group you can:

- ✓ Get a resolution in support of the FCTC passed by your board (call 1-800-540-5418 for a sample resolution)
- ✓ Join the Framework Convention Alliance. ([www.fctc.org](http://www.fctc.org))
- ✓ Call us for more information on how you can help

Call 1-800-540-5418  
for more information

## CANADA'S LEADERSHIP

Canada was one of the first countries to implement comprehensive tobacco control strategies, and is still considered a world leader in this field.

- ◆ Canada's 1988 advertising ban was among the world's first legislative restraints on tobacco marketing.
- ◆ Canada was one of the first jurisdictions to protect the travelling public from second-hand smoke.
- ◆ Canada was one of the first jurisdictions to provide legislative protection from second-hand smoke to workers (the federal Non-Smokers Health Act gave this protection to federally-regulated workers in 1989).

◆ Canada was one of the first countries to require black-and-white warnings on the front of the cigarette package (1994).

◆ Canada was the first country to require full-colour image warnings (2000).

◆ At the international level, Canada has provided very strong support to the World Health Organization's tobacco control program.

◆ Canada has been a leading supporter of the development of a framework convention for tobacco control. The first and second WHO meetings of public health and legal experts were hosted by Canada (in Halifax and Vancouver). Health Canada has been a major funder of FCTC initiatives.

Canada was the first country to require cigarette package warnings with pictures



## SOURCES & RESOURCES

### INTERNATIONAL

*The Framework Convention Alliance* is a coalition of over 130 organizations and networks from over 36 countries. It serves as an umbrella for groups and citizens working on the FCTC.  
[www.fctc.org](http://www.fctc.org)

*The World Health Organization's tobacco initiative*  
[Tobacco.who.int](http://Tobacco.who.int)

### CANADIAN

*Canadian Cancer Society*  
[www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

*Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada*  
[www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)

*Non-Smokers' Rights Association*  
[www.nsra-adnf.ca](http://www.nsra-adnf.ca)

*Health Canada*  
[www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)

This document was produced by:

### PHYSICIANS FOR A SMOKE-FREE CANADA

1226A Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1Y 3A1

Phone: 613-233-4878  
Fax: 613-233-7797

Email: [ccallard@smoke-free.ca](mailto:ccallard@smoke-free.ca)  
Web: [www.smoke-free.ca](http://www.smoke-free.ca)