

54th DIRECTING COUNCIL

67th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF WHO FOR THE AMERICAS

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Provisional Agenda Item 7.5

CD54/INF/5
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A. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WHO FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON TOBACCO CONTROL

Background

1. This is a progress report on tobacco control in the Region of the Americas between 30 June 2013 (document CD52/INF/4) (1) and 30 April 2015, in the framework of resolutions CD48.R2 (2008), adopted by the 48th Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) (2), and CD50.R6 (2010), adopted by the 50th Directing Council (3).

Update on Progress Achieved

2. The number of States Parties to the World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) increased to 30 in the Region of the Americas with ratification by El Salvador in October 2014. In the last two years, progress has been slow in the implementation of the mandates of the FCTC.

3. With regard to surveillance, a new round of the Global Youth Tobacco Survey was carried out in seven countries and is in preparation in four more. The Global Adult Tobacco Survey was repeated in Mexico and was carried out for the first time in Costa Rica. It should be noted that Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay have included standardized questions on tobacco in their national surveys.

4. Chile and Venezuela, within the framework of their respective tax reforms, have established measures to make tobacco products more expensive. Honduras has adjusted its specific tax on tobacco to take inflation into account; Dominica and Grenada have raised its special tax on consumption, taking effect in 2015, while Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Saint Lucia are making headway with proposals in this regard. There are six Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, two of which (Nicaragua and Uruguay) belong to the Region.

5. No new legislation on smoke-free environments has been passed, but enabling regulations were issued for the Brazilian law that took effect in December 2014.

6. Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago have issued enabling regulations for their laws on packaging and labeling of tobacco products, which includes graphic health warnings, while several countries have renewed such images during the biennium. To date, all the Parties that have not yet implemented article 11 of the FCTC have missed the stipulated deadline to do so.

7. Uruguay has joined the four countries that have approved a total ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (Brazil, Colombia, Panama, and Suriname). At the end of this biennium, the 22 countries that have not yet complied with this article will have missed the deadline for implementation set in the FCTC.

8. The situation of tobacco industry interference against tobacco control policies remains unchanged.

9. The Pan American Sanitary Bureau has continued to lend its technical support, both in the drafting of tobacco control laws and in the process of approving and implementing them, and in the defense against attacks by industry. Assistance to the Parties and to the Secretariat of the Framework Convention has continued through ongoing communications between meetings of the Conference of the Parties. A regional workshop in preparation for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties was organized with financial support from Panama. Finally, the *amicus curiae* submission made by the Secretariat to the International Center for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID), an institution belonging to the World Bank Group, was accepted on 18 March 2015, in the arbitration requested by Philip Morris against Uruguay.¹

Measures Recommended to Improve the Situation

10. In general, the recommendations made in the 2013 progress report (Document CD52/INF/4) are reiterated, with special emphasis on the following points:

- a) the Parties should consider ratifying the Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, adopted at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the WHO-FCTC, if they have not yet done so;
- b) Argentina, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti and the United States of America should consider ratification of the WHO FCTC;
- c) the Member States should consider the possibility of implementing the four “best buys” in tobacco control in order to reach the goal of the Global Tobacco Surveillance System: a 30% reduction in the prevalence of tobacco use by 2025, if they have not yet done so;

¹ <http://www.iareporter.com/>

- d) the Member States should consider including the subject of tobacco control in the program of all United Nations agencies at the country level, and in all projects of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)² (4, 5).

Action by the Directing Council

11. The Directing Council is requested to take note of this progress report and to formulate the recommendations it deems relevant.

References

1. Pan American Health Organization. Implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control [Internet]. 52nd Directing Council of PAHO, 65th session of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas; 30 September–4 October 2013; Washington (D.C.) United States. Washington (D.C.): PAHO; 2013 (Document CD52/INF/4-D) [consulted 21 March 2015]. Available at: http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=22610&Itemid=270&lang=en
2. Pan American Health Organization. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control: Opportunities and challenges for its implementation in the Region of the Americas [Internet]. 48th Directing Council of PAHO, 60th session of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas; 29 September–3 October 2008; Washington (D.C.) United States. Washington (D.C.): PAHO, 2010 (Resolution CD48.R2) [consulted 4 March 2013]. Available at: <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/cd/cd48.r2-e.pdf>.
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² In compliance with the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, and in compliance with the resolution of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of July 2012.

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