



This document relates to item 7.2 of the provisional agenda.

Fifth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the
WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, 12-17 November 2012, Seoul, South Korea

FCA Policy Briefing:

International cooperation to support FCTC implementation

Key recommendations:

- COP5 should establish and fund a working group on mechanisms of assistance and support for implementation of the FCTC;
- COP5 should mandate the Convention Secretariat to continue engaging with the UN Ad-hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Tobacco Control and ECOSOC, and to present at each meeting of the Task Force a synthesis of all obstacles to FCTC implementation identified by Parties;
- COP5 should consider requesting the Convention Secretariat to further explore cooperation with regional organizations concerning the promotion and implementation of the FCTC;
- Parties should actively promote the Convention at international and regional events related to NCDs, during the MDG review process and at consultations on the post-2015 development framework.

Introduction

Parties have repeatedly recognised the importance of international cooperation to implement the tobacco control measures included in the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The Convention Secretariat has been mandated by the Convention¹ and decisions of past COP sessions² to stimulate and facilitate work in this area. Despite the progress achieved in past years³, “international cooperation and mutual assistance between the Parties ... continue to be in general underutilized, and thus have great potential for improvement”⁴. Moreover, many countries continue to report a need for assistance with FCTC implementation⁵.

Report FCTC/COP/5/16 provides an overview of activities on international cooperation undertaken by the Convention Secretariat, as well as latest developments related to tobacco control at the international level. The Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) welcomes the Secretariat’s report, and encourages Parties and the COP to support work on international cooperation within the United Nations system, regional and sub-regional blocs and development partners. Given the disparities between recent global achievements and the remaining challenges at the country level, COP5 should

¹ Article 24.3(e).

² Decision COP1 FCTC/COP1(13), decision COP2 FCTC/COP2(10), decision COP4 FCTC/COP4(17), FCTC/COP4(18), and FCTC/COP4(19).

³ COP5 report FCTC/COP/5/16, para 2-7.

⁴ COP5 report FCTC/COP/5/5, p.19.

⁵ COP5 report FCTC/COP/5/15 para 8.

establish an intersessional working group on mechanisms of assistance for the implementation of the FCTC, which should, among other things, develop a longer-term strategy on international cooperation for tobacco control to stimulate greater coordination and investment in FCTC implementation⁶.

Current framework for international cooperation on tobacco control

At COP4, Parties mandated the Convention Secretariat to stimulate international cooperation in tobacco control at three levels⁷:

1. Within the **United Nations system**, through the work of the Ad-hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Tobacco Control;
2. Among **observers to the COP**, such as intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, and;
3. Through engagement with other organizations, such as **development agencies** and **development banks**.

Descriptions of the activities undertaken by the Convention Secretariat relating to international coordination and cooperation are provided in report FCTC/COP/5/16. The following sections of this document outline key achievements in each of the areas and FCA's suggestions for future work.

United Nations system

Significant progress has been achieved in promoting the Convention within the United Nations (UN) system. In July 2012, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) adopted a resolution on UN system-wide coherence on tobacco control⁸. This decision demonstrates the strong commitment of the UN system to support the Convention, and encourages UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies to contribute to the FCTC's implementation.

The ECOSOC resolution also requests that the UN Ad-hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Tobacco Control meet annually, and that further steps be taken to effectively monitor its work, as well as integration of the FCTC within UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF). In addition, specific areas were identified in which UN agencies and other international organizations can support tobacco control at the country level⁹.

FCA welcomes the ECOSOC resolution and congratulates the Convention Secretariat, WHO and the Tobacco Free Initiative (TFI) on successfully convening the meeting of the Ad-hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Tobacco Control in February 2012. Similar meetings, convened annually, should contribute to ongoing communication between the Convention Secretariat and numerous UN agencies, and lead to greater convergence on tobacco control within the UN system. FCA supports the recommendations in report FCTC/COP/5/16 that the Convention Secretariat should continue engaging with the Task Force and ECOSOC.

In this respect, COP5 should request the Convention Secretariat to present at each meeting of the Task Force a synthesis of all obstacles to FCTC implementation identified by Parties in their implementation reports, through the Needs Assessment missions, or communicated to the Convention Secretariat

⁶ FCA recommends the establishment of the same working group also in its Policy briefing on Mechanisms of Assistance and Financial Resources.

⁷ COP4 report FCTC/COP/4/17 and COP4 decision FCTC/COP4(17).

⁸ UN Resolution E/RES/2012/4.

⁹ Document E/2012/70.

directly by a Party. This information should guide the work of the Task Force and its deliberations. A report on the meetings and the work of the Task Force, as well as potential areas of action by the COP or Parties identified through such meetings, should be presented to each session of the COP as a separate report.

COP may also consider requesting the Convention Secretariat and relevant offices within ECOSOC to explore whether costs associated with holding the Task Force meetings, which represent \$60,000 in the proposed budget for 2014-2015¹⁰, may be covered through alternative sources, rather than in the budget of the Convention.

Observers to the COP: intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations

Many intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) that are observers to the COP are part of the UN system and are also members of the UN Ad-hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Tobacco Control¹¹. At the same time, other IGOs, such as regional and sub-regional blocks, have become official observers to the COP over time¹².

Regional organizations represent important structures that can facilitate work on tobacco control. Cooperation at the regional level is critical to addressing the illicit trade in tobacco products, taxation policies, cross border advertisement, packaging and labelling, and product regulation. Existing regional and sub-regional organisations, with functional cooperation procedures in place, provide excellent frameworks for regional cooperation in tobacco control.

COP may consider requesting the Convention Secretariat to further explore cooperation with regional organizations in the promotion and implementation of the FCTC. At the same time, FCA urges Parties to explore ways to include FCTC implementation in existing international and regional cooperation initiatives.

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) also play an important part in promoting and strengthening the FCTC internationally. For example, FCA members have actively engaged in preparations and the holding of many important events in 2011, such as the UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs, and contributed to the strong presence of tobacco control within deliberations on non-communicable diseases.

Development Agencies and Development Banks

International investment in tobacco control is instrumental to achieving progress on FCTC implementation, particularly in countries with limited domestic resources. In 2006, a report for COP1 identified that the support of development agencies and banks would be essential for establishing

¹⁰ COP5 Explanatory note on Proposed workplan and budget for the financial period 2014–2015. (FCTC/COP/5/INF.DOC./2), budget item 5.1.

¹¹ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Bank, World Customs Organization (WCO), World Trade Organization (WTO).

¹² African Union, League of Arab States, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, Organization of the Islamic Conference, Secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR).

comprehensive tobacco control, including tobacco taxation, in low-resource countries, which should in turn generate sustainable domestic funding for tobacco control¹³.

FCA welcomes contributions from the European Union and the Australian Government that enabled the Convention Secretariat to deliver joint Needs Assessment (NA) missions. These include activities such as reaching out to development organizations and identifying lead donors for the countries that underwent NA missions. This is a welcome stepping stone in efforts to channel more resources towards FCTC implementation.

Unfortunately, progress in mobilizing international resources for FCTC implementation still seems to be limited. Resources provided directly to Parties through bilateral development assistance or other means are not captured by report FCTC/COP/5/15 on Financial resources and mechanisms of assistance. Information provided by Parties in their reports suggests that only one in six FCTC Parties report having encouraged international organizations to provide funding for FCTC implementation¹⁴. High-income countries were least likely to report having encouraged such funding¹⁵.

FCA remains concerned by the lack of international support for tobacco control through development channels. Both donor and recipient Parties should exchange views and information on possible efforts to strengthen investment in tobacco control. FCA recommends that COP5 establish and finance a **working group on mechanisms of assistance and support for implementation of the FCTC** which should examine, among other things, existing barriers to international support for treaty implementation.

International cooperation and the development agenda: future opportunities

2011 saw major accomplishments in promoting the FCTC globally and regionally. Governments made a specific commitment to accelerate implementation of the FCTC in three high-level documents – the UN Political Declaration on non-communicable diseases (NCDs)¹⁶, the Moscow Declaration on NCDs¹⁷ and the Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health¹⁸. Also, regional declarations promoting accelerated implementation of the Convention were adopted^{19 20 21 22}.

WHO and other UN agencies continue to highlight NCDs as one of the major health and development threats worldwide. Processes to develop an NCD global monitoring framework²³ and a Global Action

¹³ COP1 report A/FCTC/COP/1/4 concluded that “*The development of in-country financing mechanisms ... is clearly critical if sustainable funding of tobacco control work is to be ensured. ... [I]t seems that in the longer term countries capable of implementing relevant taxation policies would be able to develop a level of sustainability. The role of donors will largely be to assist developing countries get to that point.*” (para 149).

¹⁴ Each Party is asked the question: *Have you encouraged relevant regional and international intergovernmental organizations and financial and development institutions in which you are represented to provide financial assistance for developing country Parties and for Parties with economies in transition to assist them in meeting their obligations under the Convention?*

¹⁵ Calculated from answers provided through Parties’ reports; http://www.who.int/fctc/reporting/party_reports/en/index.html accessed 1 September, 2012.

¹⁶ UN resolution A/RES/66/2 – Political Declaration of the UN HLM on NCDs.

¹⁷ First Global Ministerial Conference on Healthy Lifestyles and Noncommunicable Disease Control - Moscow Declaration.

¹⁸ World Conference on Social Determinants of Health – Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health.

¹⁹ PAHO Ministerial Declaration for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases.

²⁰ Jakarta Call for Action on Noncommunicable Diseases.

²¹ Seoul Declaration on noncommunicable disease prevention and control in the Western Pacific Region.

²² The Brazzaville declaration on NCDs prevention and control in the WHO African Region.

²³ A formal meeting of Member States on the Monitoring framework and targets for the prevention and control of NCDs will be held 5-7 November 2012; more information is available at:

http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2012/ncd_discussion_paper/en/index.html.

Plan to address NCDs²⁴ are ongoing. It is essential that the FCTC continue to be promoted as the key tool to address NCDs, and that tobacco control be understood as a contributor to sustainable economic, social and environmental development.

At the same time, the review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and consultations on post-2015 development priorities is already underway. Major events, including a high-level meeting on health-related post-MDG objectives and discussions on the new development agenda at the General Assembly²⁵, will take place between 2013 and 2015. The Convention and its implementation should be promoted within these efforts to ensure that the benefits and cost-effectiveness of tobacco control are well understood and fully appreciated by development partners.

FCA encourages Parties to actively promote the Convention at international and regional events related to NCDs, during the MDG review process and in consultations on the post-2015 development framework.

Working Group on mechanisms of assistance and support for implementation of the FCTC

FCA recommends that COP5 establish a **working group on mechanisms of assistance and support for implementation of the FCTC**. The mandate of the working group should be broad and also include objectives to support international cooperation on tobacco control.

In FCA's view, in terms of international cooperation, the working group should:

- Identify and promote best practices on accessing international resources for tobacco control;
- Research the barriers to accessing international development assistance for implementation of the Convention; and
- Elaborate a roadmap to promote the Convention at international and regional events during the upcoming review of the MDGs and during establishment of post-2015 international development goals.

This working group should also address additional components of the FCTC system of assistance²⁶, particularly resource mobilization and mechanisms of assistance. As a result, the mandate of the working group should also include²⁷:

1. Undertake a review of successes in mobilising resources for FCTC implementation at the country level through existing mechanisms of assistance, as well as through bilateral and multilateral development assistance;
2. Provide recommendations on additional means that have the potential to channel existing resources or generate innovative resources for FCTC implementation;
3. Propose a format for impact assessments of FCTC needs assessment missions and the database of available resources;

²⁴ Member States and UN Agencies are invited to share their comments in response to the 'Zero Draft' Action Plan during the second informal consultation on 1 November 2012; more information is available at: http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2012/draft_action_plan/en/index.html.

²⁵ The UN's global consultation on health will take place between October 2012 and February 2013; more information is available at: http://www.who.int/topics/millennium_development_goals/post2015/en/.

²⁶ Detailed description of the FCTC assistance framework is provided in report FCTC/COP/5/15 para 22-23.

²⁷ More information on the mandate of the working group in terms of resource mobilization is provided in FCA's Policy briefing on Mechanisms of Assistance and Financial Resources.

4. Commission the development of any necessary guidance materials, such as toolkits for implementation of FCTC Article 5.2, and an estimate of the resources required for implementation of all FCTC articles in low- and middle-income countries.

Sufficient funding should be provided for the meetings of the working group between COP5 and COP6. Recommendations of the working group should be submitted for consideration at COP6.