

**“Implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ...  
There is no other 'best buy' for the money on offer.”**

- WHO Director-General Margaret Chan at the WHO Global Forum in Moscow, 27 April 2011

### **World No Tobacco Day 2011**

## **Tobacco control treaty embraced globally but needs boost on the ground**

WASHINGTON, 31 May 2011 – A legally binding treaty to curb the devastating global tobacco epidemic has had amazing successes in its six years, but the international community should integrate the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) into the global development process in order to accelerate and strengthen its implementation, says the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) to mark World No Tobacco Day 2011.

The FCTC entered into force in 2005. Today it has 172 Parties representing about 87 per cent of the world’s population, which makes it one of the most successful ever United Nations treaties. The FCTC sets out specific steps for governments addressing tobacco use, including to:

- Adopt tax and price measures to reduce tobacco consumption;
- Ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship;
- Create smoke-free work and public spaces;
- Put prominent health warnings on tobacco packages;
- Combat illicit trade in tobacco products.

The FCTC’s successes include graphic warnings on tobacco packages. Today, 41 jurisdictions worldwide require such warnings, led by Uruguay – which requires warnings covering 80 per cent of packages – and Canada (75 per cent), the first country to implement graphic warnings. The Australian Government has proposed labels that would cover 82.5 per cent of cigarette packages.

Smoke-free laws have also blossomed since 2005. More than 60 countries have enacted strong or comprehensive smoke-free laws at the national or local level. This includes Mexico City, where in September 2009 the Supreme Court ruled in favour of a 100 percent smoke-free law, giving the city the authority to go beyond the federal law to protect the fundamental right of health for all citizens.

Yet the FCTC faces huge challenges, led by the tobacco industry. With populations and incomes rising in developing countries, the industry has shifted its attention there and is attacking any governments that oppose it. For example, in 2010 tobacco giant Philip Morris International (PMI) challenged Uruguay's proposed warning labels, and other tobacco control measures, claiming they violated the 1988 investment protection treaty between Uruguay and Switzerland (where PMI is based).

Tobacco use is a major risk factor for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which are increasingly an obstacle to development, threatening the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015. A [World Health Organization report](#) released at a meeting of health ministers in Moscow in April confirmed this trend.

To address these shortfalls, FCA is proposing that the FCTC be recognised as a major tool for improving global health and boosting development. Leading researchers, including in the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet*, have identified FCTC implementation as the most effective, and cost-effective, measure to fight non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which cause 2/3 of all global deaths and have been labelled “a public health emergency in slow motion” by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.

In September the UN will host the NCD Summit, whose goal is to develop an international roadmap to combat NCDs. Following on the recommendations of WHO regional consultations and the Moscow conference, FCA is calling on UN Member States to stress the need for accelerated and effective FCTC implementation in the NCD Summit Outcome Document.

Government action that includes the co-operation of all relevant ministries as well as health departments, as suggested in the FCTC, and the commitment of world leaders to implement the Convention are important steps in cutting the toll of 5.4 million people killed by tobacco each year.

**For more information contact FCA Communications Manager Marty Logan in Ottawa.  
Tel: +1.613.241.3927, ext 302, m: +1.613.617.1179, [loganm@fctc.org](mailto:loganm@fctc.org), Skype: loganjourn.**

