

**World No Tobacco Day 2019
Joint Press Release**



International Union Against
Tuberculosis and Lung Disease
Health solutions for the poor

Making Tobacco Control A Priority to Achieve Lung Health

Ottawa/Paris, May 31, 2019 – Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death worldwide, killing over eight million people each year, and putting many more at risk of a range of long-term lung health problems in their most productive years. Exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke is also a major risk factor for a wide range of respiratory diseases, and causes over a million deaths each year.

In 2014, an important [study](#) highlighted the harmful links between smoking tobacco and developing tuberculosis (TB). Published in the *International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease*, the study indicated that regular tobacco smoking doubles the risk of “recurrent” TB – a condition where people who have been successfully treated for TB develop TB again.

To reduce the death toll and improve quality of life for people suffering from respiratory health problems, tobacco control, in addition to access to effective health systems and treatment, is essential.

On World No Tobacco Day, we encourage smokers to quit as one of the best things they can do to promote their own health, and that of other members of the community.

We urge governments to discourage the use of tobacco in any form by educating populations on its deadly consequences.

We call on governments to make concerted efforts to combat tobacco smoking; which causes or exacerbates TB, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, pneumonia, bronchitis, reduced lung growth and function and air pollution.

The World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) provides a set of evidence-based and cost-effective policies to break the deadly cycle of tobacco use and lung disease. Governments need to take urgent action to fully implement the Convention, thereby reducing the risks posed by smoking and second-hand smoke to lung health.

Recognising that strong government action can decrease tobacco use in populations, Parties to the FCTC recently adopted the [Global Strategy to Accelerate Tobacco Control](#)

[and Sustainable Development](#). The highest levels of government now have a roadmap to take effective actions to match the scale and impact of the tobacco epidemic on people's health and countries' economies.

"Key to the success of interventions to address tobacco smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke is whole-of-government approaches through accelerated implementation of the FCTC and strengthened health systems," Framework Convention Alliance Executive Director Francis Thompson said. "A great deal of lung health conditions caused by tobacco smoking is preventable, especially if we implement proven and effective tobacco control measures, including price and tax measures to reduce demand of tobacco products," he added.

"The evidence is clear on the devastating impact that tobacco has on lung health," said Dr Gan Quan, Director of the Department of Tobacco Control at the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease. "Tobacco control must be a priority for governments around the world if we are to reduce the huge number of preventable deaths caused by tobacco-related lung diseases – and it is crucial that we do not allow the tobacco industry to interfere with or undermine policies which are needed to protect lung health."

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals commitment is clear: We must reduce premature death from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) by one third by 2030.

We can achieve global and national NCDs commitments if we integrate tobacco control – a major risk factor for NCDs – into broader health systems and accelerate the implementation of the FCTC, under the umbrella of universal health coverage.

Let's make tobacco control a priority to achieve lung health and overall well-being.

ABOUT

Framework Convention Alliance works to rid this world from the devastating health, social, economic and environmental consequences of tobacco and tobacco use. With hundreds of non-government member organisations from over 100 countries, the Alliance grew out of civil society's participation in the work that produced the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in 2005, the first modern-day public health treaty. We are a leading advocate for including the FCTC and tobacco control in the international health and development framework, including the Sustainable Development Goals. The Alliance is an influential voice for civil society at the FCTC Conference of the Parties.

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The Union was founded in 1920 and is the world's first global health organisation. We are a global leader in ending TB, we fight the tobacco industry, and we solve key problems in treating major diseases. We use science to design the best treatments and policies for the most pressing public health challenges affecting people living in poverty around the world. The Union's members, staff and consultants operate in more than 150 countries and embody our core values of accountability, independence, quality and solidarity.

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