

## **Open Letter to the WHO FCTC Conference of the Parties (COP) on the Environment**

### **Protect the Environment from Tobacco Industry Interference**

*As governments prepare for the November 2025 WHO FCTC Conference of the Parties (COP) to advance implementation of Article 18 on environmental protection, we, the undersigned civil society organizations, urge Parties to adopt a strong decision that protects the environment and public health from the harmful practices of the tobacco industry.*

Each year, in addition to the environmental damage caused by tobacco production, the tobacco industry dumps 4.5 trillion toxic cigarette butts into the environment, causing an estimated USD 26 billion in marine damage through heavy metals, microplastics, and pesticides. Pooled or wet cigarette butts can leach lead and cadmium at levels that exceed hazardous waste thresholds, confirming the toxic and hazardous nature of this waste. Cigarette filters are unnecessary single-use plastics that provide no health benefit and mislead consumers into believing they reduce harm, when in fact they increase the risk of aggressive lung cancer.

Despite these harms, tobacco companies have built extensive greenwashing partnerships—such as “tobacco circularity” or “recycling,” “eco/bio/safe filters,” and “anti-litter” or “clean-up” campaigns—to improve their image and gain access to environmental policy spaces. In most cases, the costs shouldered by tobacco companies are disproportionate to the actual costs of remediation, while Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) initiatives are used as a form of CSR to secure policy legitimacy rather than accountability.

We call on governments to take decisive action towards:

- A ban on all cigarette filters, regardless of material composition, and facilitates the classification of tobacco product waste as hazardous waste;
- The establishment of mechanisms to develop technical guidance on managing tobacco-related toxic waste,
- The enforcement of full financial accountability of tobacco companies under the polluter-pays principle;
- The rejection of tobacco industry participation or partnership in environmental policy processes, including Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) or product-stewardship schemes;
- The prohibition of the tobacco industry’s misleading environmental narratives as these divert attention from genuine solutions.

This letter also reflects our shared understanding of the tobacco industry’s greenwashing tactics—including recycling, circularity, anti-litter, and clean-up programs that may appear helpful but, when carried out without exposing the hazardous consequences and without demanding the industry’s accountability, risk advancing the industry’s interests or reinforcing its misleading narratives.

We stand ready to support governments in ensuring that environmental measures contribute to ending—not concealing—the industry’s environmental damage and in restoring integrity to global environmental governance consistent with the WHO FCTC.

Signatories:

1. Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control
2. Alliantie voor een Rookvrije Samenleving
3. Health Development and Anti Malaria Association
4. Malaysian Women’s Action for Tobacco Control and Health (MyWATCH)
5. ADIC Sri Lanka (Alcohol and Drug Information Center)
6. Tanzania Tobacco Control Forum (TTCF)
7. Swiss Association for Tobacco Control
8. Vision for Accelerated Sustainable Development
9. Salud Justa Mx
10. International Helping For The Young
11. Action pour la Protection des Droits de l'Enfant (APDE)
12. UNISC
13. Youth Health Organization<sup>8</sup>
14. Tulasi Meher Unesco Club
15. Japan Society for Tobacco Control
16. Sciensano
17. Tobacco Control Alliance of Georgia
18. Stowelink Foundation
19. PROI
20. Nofumadores.org
21. International African Youth, Mental Health and Environmental Initiatives (IAYMHEI)
22. Lentera anak foundation
23. Den of Hope Youth group
24. ACT Promoção da Saúde / ACT Health Promotion
25. NH SAHY
26. Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP (CYMG UNEP)
27. San Beda Economics Society
28. ASEAN Youth Organization
29. Pratyasha Anti-drug's club
30. Centro de Información y Educación para la Prevención del Abuso de Drogas -CEDRO
31. Cambodia Movement for Health
32. ASH Canada
33. Comité national contre le tabagisme, CNCT
34. Center for Clinical Research and Prevention
35. Center for Clinical Research and Prevention, Frederiksberg University Hospital
36. FIC Argentina
37. Comité national contre le tabagisme
38. RENATA

39. Comision Nacional Permanente de Lucha Antitabaquica (COLAT) Perú
40. Filter the Future Coalition
41. Costa Rica Saludable
42. ASH Scotland
43. Tunisian Tobacco Control Alliance
44. Fundación Ecuatoriana de Salud Respiratoria- Fesar
45. Alianza Antitabaco Ecuador
46. Alianza Juvenil Antitabaco- AJA
47. Coalicion Paraguay Sin Tabaquismo
48. Centro de Promoción en Salud y Asistencia Familiar (CEPROSAF)
49. Human Environmental Association for Development (HEAD)
50. Corporate Accountability
51. Ñande Bolivia
52. FUNDAHABLA
53. Afrique contre le tabac ACONTA
54. RUKKI (Indonesia Health Policy Forum)
55. Zambia Heart and Stroke Foundation
56. Comité/Club UNESCO Universitaire pour la Lutte Contre la Drogue et autres pandémies ( CLUCOD)
57. Indonesian Youth Council for Tactical Changes (IYCTC)
58. European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention - ENSP
59. PROI
60. Smoke Free Israel
61. Romanian Society of Pneumology
62. BlueLink
63. Ville Libre Sans Tabac
64. Grand Est Sans Tabac
65. Our Health Organization
66. Ocean. Now!
67. Smoke Free Partnership
68. A Non Smoking Generation
69. TAFA Madagascar
70. Gallifrey Foundation
71. Swiss Association for Tobacco Control
72. ADSCO Tchad
73. Association For Promotion Sustainable Development
74. International Helping For The Young
75. OxySuisse
76. Smoke-Free Bulgaria Association
77. Action on Smoking and Health
78. Jóvenes Indígenas y Afrobolivianos de Santa Cruz - JIASC
79. Tobacco & Nicotine Free Life Coalition (ex Smoke-free Life Coalition)
80. OMIS
81. FUNDACION BOLIVIA SALUDABLE
82. Tobacco Free Jordan
83. Tobacco Control Research Group, University of Bath

84. Surfrider Foundation Europe
85. NGO Advocacy Center LIFE
86. Tobacco Free Association of Zambia
87. Zambia Heart and Stroke Foundation
88. Association du Développement et de la Promotion des Droits de l'Homme
89. Green Speaking
90. EarthMedic and EarthNurse Foundation for Planetary Health
91. Taller Ecologista
92. Youth Action Network (YAN)
93. GEST
94. Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA)
95. Filter the Future
96. Women's Coalition Against Cancer - (WOCACA)
97. Belgian Foundation Against Cancer
98. Belgian Alliance for a Smoke Free Society
99. Slovenian Coalition for Public Health, Environment and Tobacco Control
100. Fondation Cancer
101. BLUE 21 / Unfairtobacco
102. Action Humanitaire et Restauration de l'environnement
103. Association of European Cancer Leagues
104. Asociatia Aer Pur Romania
105. Vital Strategies
106. Vision for Alternative Development (VALD Ghana)
107. ONG ADIES (association pour le développement intégré de l'environnement et de la santé)
108. AVSO Asociacion Voluntariado Social Oncologico
109. Zambia Heart and Stroke Foundation
110. Alianza Dominicana Antitabaquismo (ADAT)
111. Chile Libre de Tabaco
112. Mesa Tabaco o Salud Chile
113. En-Comunicación
114. Mesa Ciudadana Tabaco o Salud - Chile.
115. Jeunes leaders pour le développement
116. Cancer Society of Finland
117. Aktionsbündnis Nichtraucher e.V.
118. Ligue Sénégalaise contre le Tabac(LISTAB)
119. European Medical Students' Association
120. Corporate Accountability and Public Participation Africa (CAPPA)
121. ACITASVE
122. ONG Agir en Faveur de l'Environnement (ONG AFE)
123. Macedonian Respiratory Society
124. Health Rights and Tobacco Control Network, Nepal
125. Sauti ya Mtoto Foundation (SMF)
126. Action des Femmes pour une Planète Bio (AFEPB)
127. Accion Ecologica Mexico
128. Renevlyn Development Initiative

129. Human Environmental Association for Development
130. Emmanuel Tuyishime For Bright Future ( ETBF ) Initiative
131. Respira Libre Consultores
132. Global Goals Connection
133. Fundación Ecuatoriana de Salud Respiratoria- Fesar
134. Coalicion Paraguay Sin Tabaquismo
135. Green Speaking
136. Ecopeace Teen Café
137. Educadores Carta de la Tierra
138. Sauti ya Mtoto Foundation
139. Jua Craft Mama's
140. Toxisphera Environmental Health Association
141. Joven Líder Carta de la Tierra
142. The Good Society IIUM
143. Malaysia Youth Parliament (Parlimen Belia Malaysia)
144. Red Internacional Promotores de ODS
145. Bhutan Food and Drug Authority, Ministry of Health
146. CNPT - Comité Nacional para la Prevención del Tabaquismo
147. Norwegian Cancer Society
148. Thant Myanmar
149. Fnpe
150. Coalition for Americas' Health CLAS Coalición América Saludable
151. International Network of Women Against Tobacco (INWAT)
152. Juventud Unida en Acción
153. African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA)
154. Cities for CEDAW History and Futures Project
155. ASH Finland
156. Alianza Juvenil (Youth Alliance)
157. Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
158. Anti Tobacco Network
159. Kaaijayu GYBN Bolivia
160. Guatemala Saludable
161. Gracias No Fumo SC
162. Fundación OneSea
163. Fundación InterAmericana del Corazón
164. Fundación Anáas
165. Coalición México Salud-Hable
166. Cigarette Butt Pollution Project
167. Disability Peoples Forum Uganda
168. RAMP BENIN
169. Global Goals Connection
170. PROGGA Knowledge for Progress
171. Healis Sekhsaria Institute for Public Health
172. Institute of Public Health of the Republic of North Macedonia
173. International Federation of Medical Students' Association - IFMSA

174. ALLIANCE FOR A TOBACCO-FREE ITALY- ALLEANZA PER UN'ITALIA SENZA TABACCO
175. Global Youth for Tobacco Control
176. Iniciativa Ciudadana XQNS
177. Sociedad Vasconavarra de Prevención del Tabaquismo
178. Plastic Free Future
179. South African Tobacco-Free Youth Forum (SATFYF)
180. Educar Consumidores
181. Bangladesh Medical Students' Society (BMSS)
182. Nipe Fagio
183. Society of Native Nations
184. InterAmerican Heart Foundation
185. European Network of Medical Residents in Public Health
186. Break Free From Plastic
187. Red PaPaz
188. Global Alliance for Tobacco Control (GATC)
189. Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives - GAIA
190. Green to Abundance Development and Empowerment Foundation
191. Mabudi Youth Community Development cooperative
192. KEYCDA
193. Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre
194. Red de Acción por los Derechos Ambientales RADA
195. Bioget
196. Youth Help Sierra Leone
197. Loving Charity Community Based Organization
198. SITAB Italian Society Of Tobaccology
199. Hope For Youth Liberia
200. Human Nature Projects Uganda
201. Philippine Pediatric Society
202. Nexus3 Foundation
203. Cedars Refuge Foundation
204. HealthJustice
205. Youth Advocacy Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse
206. Mount Kenya University
207. Comrades of Rohingya Youths (CRY)
208. Healthy Philippines Alliance
209. Community Green Mindsets
210. Upver.association
211. Bioget : biogaz électricité pour Tous
212. Korea Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education
213. Turkish Green Crescent Society (Türkiye Yesilay Cemiyeti)
214. Youth for Mental Health Coalition
215. Healthy Philippines Alliance Youth Network
216. Hidden Plastic
217. Iranian Medical Students Associations
218. Youth Against Vape

219. North Coast Innovators

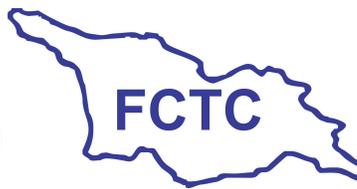


Global Center for  
Good Governance  
in Tobacco Control

Alliantie rookvrije  
samenleving

My  
WATCH  
Pertubuhan Wanita Malaysia Untuk  
Kawalan Tembakau dan Kesihatan  
Malaysian Women's Action for Tobacco Control and Health

ADIC  
Alcohol and Drug Information Centre



PROI **nofumadores.org**



**ACT**  
Promoção da Saúde





**ASEAN  
YOUTH  
ORGANIZATION**



**CEDRO** *ash.ca*  
*action on smoking & health*



**Frederiksberg  
Hospital**

**fic** Argentina  
Fundación InterAmericana del Corazón



**COLAT - PERÚ** *coalition*

**Filter the Future**



**Costa Rica  
Saludable**



**Alianza Juvenil**  
Bienestar & Desarrollo



**corporate  
accountability**  
**JOIN THE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN**





*Note: This letter will remain open for additional signatories beyond the COP, continuing as a standing call for governments and institutions to integrate tobacco accountability within environmental policy and implementation.*