



# FCTC

## Join the campaign against tobacco use

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[Revised Jul 02]

### **Death and disability**

By 2020, tobacco-related diseases are predicted to become the world's largest single health problem, causing an estimated 8.4 million deaths annually. However, the burden will not be shared equally around the world: deaths in the developed world are expected to rise from 1.6 to 2.4 million annually, while those in Asia are expected almost to quadruple, from 1.1 million in 1990 to an estimated 4.2 million in 2020.<sup>1</sup>

The aggressive marketing tactics of the multinational tobacco companies have contributed to the tremendous increase in smoking in developing countries. Tobacco companies use their enormous political and financial power to influence governments and promote their products in every corner of the globe.

For decades, the tobacco industry has denied the truth about the harmful effects of tobacco addiction in order to protect its profits. Although it has been challenged in the courts and parliaments of some countries, most countries have felt powerless to impose effective legislation and enforce it through the courts. Indeed, many continue to offer the tobacco industry tax breaks and other incentives.

### **Framework convention on tobacco control**

The proposed framework convention on tobacco control offers new hope in what appeared, a few years back, to be a desperate situation.

**The framework convention is the world's first public health treaty to be negotiated by governments. It will address transnational and cross-border issues, such as global advertising, smuggling and trade.** The framework convention is already acting as an important catalyst to strengthen national tobacco legislation and control programmes. The negotiation and implementation process will also help to mobilize technical and financial support for tobacco control and raise awareness about tobacco issues in many government ministries.

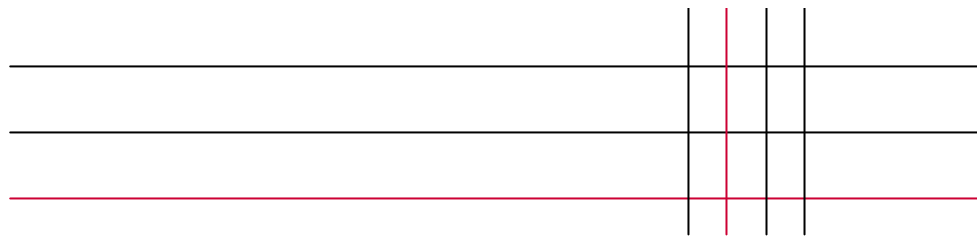
The framework convention could help to turn the tide against the tobacco industry by weakening its political power and helping to put an end to its reckless behaviour through regulation and legislation. But it must be properly negotiated and it must reflect people's real opinions.

### **Framework Convention Alliance**

The Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) is a coalition of over 160 organizations and networks from over 60 countries which serves as an umbrella organization for activities connected with the framework convention. The Alliance facilitates communication between nongovernmental organizations which are already engaged in the convention process, and others (especially in

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<sup>1</sup> Murray CJL, Lopez AD. Mortality by cause for eight regions of the world: Global Burden of Disease Study. *Lancet*, 1997, 349:1498-1504.



developing countries) which could both benefit from and contribute to a strong framework convention.

The Alliance has issued a document<sup>2</sup> entitled "10 Key Issues for Global Tobacco Control and the FCTC", laying down its position on the negotiations (for the latest information see <http://tobacco.who.int/>).

### **How you can get involved**

Here are some of the things that heart foundations can do to support the framework convention:

- learn more about the framework convention and share your knowledge with colleagues and constituents — you can find the information you need at [www.fctc.org](http://www.fctc.org)
- join the Framework Convention Alliance — email Belinda Hughes at the address below
- identify your country's delegates to the negotiations and assure them of your support for an evidence-based framework convention
- cooperate with other nongovernmental organizations
- increase political and public awareness of the framework convention
- send your representative to the framework convention negotiations.

The fifth round of negotiations is scheduled to take place on 14-25 October, 2002 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The framework convention is an extremely important public health initiative which needs your support. If this important momentum is not to be lost, we need your organization to become more active in the negotiation and implementation campaign.

[Contact: Belinda Hughes \(hughesb@globalink.org\)](mailto:hughesb@globalink.org)

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<sup>2</sup> 10 Key Issues for Global Tobacco Control and the FCTC:  
[http://www.fctc.org/inb4\\_10\\_key\\_issues.shtml](http://www.fctc.org/inb4_10_key_issues.shtml).

