



# FCTC INB6

Geneva Switzerland – February 17-28, 2003

The World Heart Federation once again had the opportunity to participate in the sixth and final round of the “Framework Convention on Tobacco Control” (FCTC) negotiating sessions (INB6) this past February 17-28, 2003. The WHF participated as an organization in official relations with the World Health Organization and as a member of the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA).

## NGO Activities

At INB6, the WHF worked in conjunction with NGO representatives from a number of international NGOs under the umbrella of the FCA. The WHF contributed to the coordination of a number of FCA activities. This included:

- Coordination of lobbying efforts in Latin America.
- Partnering on oral interventions during working group sessions along with other FCA member organizations.
- Providing several advocacy documents & materials to delegates.
- Providing information at a booth on the WHF’s latest efforts in the area of Second Hand Smoke.

## FCA Meetings


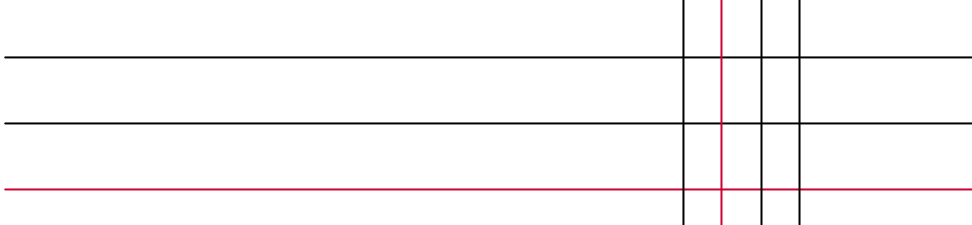
The FCA held daily morning and afternoon meetings during INB6 to ensure effective and positive participation of all FCA members. As well, the FCA held many productive meetings between NGOs and representatives of various official delegations. A host of informal meetings were held throughout the week with delegates from various regions.

Daily briefings were also held (sometimes 2x/day) with Derek Yach (Director Non-Communicable Diseases, WHO). This proved a critical means through which NGOs were informed, albeit in a very limited manner, of what occurred during the informal drafting sessions and contact group meetings.

## WHF View on Outcomes of INB6

The initial textual proposals that were being discussed during the first week and a half of INB6 were very disappointing - especially with respect to the advertising, packaging/labelling and trade/health issues. Fortunately, the situation improved significantly towards the end of the negotiations. In fact, the WHF, as well as all other NGOs were very pleased with the final text. In the view of the WHF, this text:

- Provides an excellent basis upon which comprehensive tobacco control policies can be built across the world.

- 
- 
- Provides an opportunity and encourages the Parties to pursue stronger measures than that provided in the treaty.

In particular, we were pleased with the following achievements:

- A comprehensive ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship will be obligatory for many Parties (with constitutional exceptions).
- A minimum of 30% of the principal package display areas must include warnings.
- A requirement to prohibit misleading language that gives the false impression that one tobacco product is less harmful than another.
- The Illicit Trade text represents a good framework upon which anti-smuggling measures can be built.
- The deletion of language which subordinated public health measures to other international trade agreements.
- No option for Parties to make reservations.

Although we do acknowledge that the minimum standards/obligations in this treaty fall short of a proportional response to the global tobacco epidemic, we recognize that this treaty represents an excellent starting point towards the development of comprehensive global tobacco control.

We note that we did not achieve our objectives on other important issues, for example:

- No obligation to explicitly ban misleading terms like “light” and “mild”.
- No obligation to include pictograms or pictures as part of warnings.
- The “duty-free” issue was not addressed in a meaningful manner.
- No prohibition of “vending machines”.
- Did not address the need to phase out subsidies.

For additional information on the content of the FCTC, please consult the FCA document entitled “Highlights of the FCTC”, which can be found at: <http://www.fctc.org/highlightsEN.shtml>

At the end of INB6, the WHF and other NGOs began to prepare for the upcoming meeting of the World Health Assembly in Geneva in May, where the adoption of the FCTC was to be debated.