

MAURITIUS

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

Topic: Strengthening the
Implementation of the WHO
Framework Convention on Tobacco
Control (WHO FCTC)



The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) transformed tobacco from a domestic health concern into an issue of international legal responsibility. While global smoking prevalence has declined since the Convention entered into force in 2005, implementation remains uneven due to tobacco industry interference, illicit trade, and cross-border digital marketing. As an early Party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), Mauritius views effective implementation, rather than mere ratification, as the greatest challenge facing the international community.

Mauritius has pursued a precautionary approach to tobacco regulation by enforcing comprehensive smoke-free legislation, banning electronic nicotine delivery systems before their widespread commercialization, restricting tobacco advertising, and strengthening packaging regulations.

Legally, Mauritius emphasizes that Parties remain bound by Article 5.3, which requires protection of public health policies from tobacco industry interference, and Article 13, whose implementation guidelines recommend banning cross-border advertising, including digital promotion. Mauritius further supports stronger implementation of Article 15 through universal ratification of the

Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products and greater customs cooperation among Small Island Developing States.

The Government of Mauritius is guided by the following principles:

- Protection of public health over commercial interests.
- The precautionary principle, under which emerging nicotine products should be regulated before widespread public health harms occur.

Mauritius proposes establishing an FCTC Compliance Review Mechanism, similar to treaty peer review systems, allowing States to voluntarily assess implementation gaps and exchange best practices. The delegation further recommends a Global Tobacco Interference Transparency Registry, requiring the public disclosure of all meetings between government officials and tobacco industry representatives to strengthen Article 5.3.

Mauritius also proposes an International Digital Tobacco Observatory under the World Health Organization to identify cross-border online tobacco promotion using artificial intelligence. Mauritius believes that strengthening accountability, transparency, and international cooperation is essential to ensuring that the WHO FCTC remains an effective and future-ready public health treaty.

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