

# Smoke Free Partnership

NEWS UPDATE December 2016

## *SFP Roundtable on Tobacco and Research and public stakeholder consultation – interim evaluation of Horizon 2020*

On 12 October 2016, the Smoke Free Partnership organised a roundtable on Research, Surveillance and Exchange of Information (FCTC Art 20) hosted by MEP Linda McAvan at the European Parliament. The overall objective of the roundtable was to raise awareness of and support for Article 20 of the FCTC. Participants identified gaps at country level, opportunities and barriers that facilitate tobacco control policy research between countries and research funding mechanisms, including Horizon 2020 that could support such policy research programs. The roundtable set the milestone for a high level conference on the same topic that will take place in 2017. SFP currently prepares the roundtable report which will be published on our website in the upcoming weeks. SFP also invites Coalition partners to respond to the Public stakeholder consultation regarding the interim evaluation of the Horizon 2020 programme. The objective of the consultation is to collect information from a wide audience on different aspects of Horizon 2020 implementation and the deadline is 15 January 2017. The results of the consultation will feed into the interim evaluation of the programme. As a follow up to this, the European Commission will publish a Staff Working Document with a summary of the consultation results by mid-2017. **SFP will prepare a response which will be circulated to the SFP Coalition** before the deadline. Please find more information on the consultation [here](#) and preview/print the consultation [here](#). For more information on this, contact [Ioanna Sakellaraki](#).

## *Illicit Trade*

The European Commission is currently preparing the implementing and delegated acts foreseen under Articles 15(11), 15(12) and 16(2) of the Tobacco Products Directive 2014/40/EU on an EU system for tobacco traceability and security features. In this regard, the Commission is also receiving assistance from an independent contractor. The Commission is holding a workshop in Brussels on 12 December 2016. The workshop will be attended by various stakeholders, including the tobacco industry, in order to collect their feedback on the work completed by the contractor to date relating to the design of a future EU system for tobacco traceability and security features. **SFP together with other partners will be attending and representing the tobacco control community at EU level in order to ensure that public health and the obligations under the FCTC and the Illicit Trade Protocol are respected in the development of the tracking and tracing system.**

For more information on this, contact [Kristina Stoyanova](#)

## *Public consultation on the Tobacco Tax Directive*

On 17th November the European Commission launched an Open Public Consultation on the possible revision of Council Directive 2011/64/EU, aiming at gathering the views of EU citizens and stakeholders on a set of possible options for the revision of the Directive. The Directive defines EU rules on the product categories, structure and minimum rates for excise duties on manufactured tobacco. It also looks at ensuring the proper functioning of the internal market while ensuring a high level of health protection. The European Commission is currently in the process of identifying if there is a scope and need to improve the Directive and the open public consultation is part of it. SFP and its Coalition had already replied to an [Inception Impact Assessment](#) by the Commission, on the possible proposal for revision of the Directive and is now also preparing a response to the Open Public Consultation. **SFP will circulate its Position Paper and will prepare a response which will be circulated to the SFP Coalition before the deadline.** For more information on this, contact [Kristina Stoyanova](#). Find the Open Public Consultation [here](#)



**Regarding FCTC implementation assistance**, a major announcement was made at this COP session. The **United Kingdom announced a pledge of £15 million** in extra-budgetary contributions to the Secretariat to support implementation of the FCTC in low- and middle-income countries. These funds will come from the UK's international development budget, which is a helpful example for other countries. SFP congratulates the UK for its outstanding contribution and hopes that more Parties will follow its lead in supporting FCTC implementation globally.

On 7-12 November 2016, the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the FCTC (COP7) took place in New Delhi, India. SFP was represented by its Director, Florence Berteletti and Senior Policy Advisor, Anca Toma Friedlaender.

SFP Coalition partners were also represented as part of the NGO delegation coordinated by the Framework Convention Alliance: **Deborah Arnott and Luk Joossens**, SFP Board members, **Tim Rombouts and of Guy Muller** the Dutch cancer Society, **Alexandra Engel and Alastair Bradstock** of Cancer Research UK, **Maxime Nonguebzanga Compaoré** of the Norwegian Cancer Society (who currently serves as Chair of the FCA Board), **Emmanuelle Beguinot** of the Comité National contre le Tabagisme, **Ute Mons** of the German Cancer Research Center, and **Sanne Heijndijk** of the Dutch Smokefree Alliance. Several other public health and tobacco control organisations from across Europe were represented.

Ahead of COP7, SFP worked with Coalition members to identify the membership and priorities of national delegations, identify the key priorities for each partner, and coordinate pre-COP advocacy activities. At COP7, as part of the global NGO delegation, the SFP team worked together with tobacco control advocates from all parts of the world to ensure that the decisions coming out of the COP would support implementation of the FCTC. While at COP the SFP team focused on the following priorities:

- **The International Protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products.** The Priority at COP was to promote cooperation and exchange among countries who have ratified the Illicit Trade Protocol ahead of its entry into force and first Meeting of the Parties (MOP1) planned for 2018, in particular to ensure that tracking and tracing systems worldwide are independent of the tobacco industry, in accordance with articles 8.2 and 8.12 of the Protocol.

- **WHO FCTC Article 5.3 and related issues** the COP advanced the implementation of article 5.3 by adopting a decision to establish a knowledge hub that will provide information and assistance to parties and work in collaboration with tobacco industry observatories. **Another key priority at COP was to support measures ensuring the transparency** of COP proceedings, as well as of delegations, media and the public. The COP examined a range of proposals aiming to ensure that COP sessions are shielded from undue tobacco industry interference. Due to lack of time for in-depth discussions among Parties, the proposals did not bear fruit and will be raised again at the next session of the COP.

- **Trade and investment issues**, the priority of the FCA delegation was to ensure that the COP recognises countries who have won legal challenges to tobacco control policies, and those who have succeeded in protecting the public interest measures proactively within trade agreements. The NGO delegation also worked to raise awareness of the different tools, including treaty design options, available to Parties in protecting their public health policies from tobacco industry litigation.

**The SFP congratulates the European Commission team**, who provided coordination and support for the EU delegation. We recognise the huge task of being part of, and providing coordination for, the large and diverse EU delegation, and we congratulate the DG SANTE team for its performance and sterling work during COP7. Also, we congratulate the European Union for its support to the implementation of the FCTC work plan 2016-2017 through a contribution of €400,000 in extra-budgetary funds to the Convention Secretariat.



From left to right: Anna-Eva Ampelas, Filip Borkowski, Isabel Holmqvist, Austin Rowan, Katja Bromen, and Canice Nolan, representing the European Commission at COP7. Two other European Commission representatives, Georg Roebing and Maria Pastor, are not in the picture.



-**The FCTC work plan**, the COP discussed at length the status of payment of Parties' contributions and ways to reduce arrears which threaten the full implementation of priorities agreed at each COP session for the following 2 years. The COP adopted a decision that strengthens the methods of collecting Assessed Contributions by the Convention Secretariat and establishes a system for introducing penalties for Parties which maintain their arrears.

Other major items on the COP agenda, which SFP followed closely, include:

-**Overall FCTC implementation and assistance mechanisms**, the COP had on its agenda several items including reporting arrangements, mechanisms of reviewing reports, assessing implementation needs, and providing support and assistance to parties in their implementation of the FCTC. A decision was adopted to set up a **working group to draft a "strategic framework" for the FCTC** – which should deal with a range of implementation issues, including a possible IRM. The working group will also review and prioritize Parties' needs for implementation assistance and will reflect them in the strategic framework.

-The global voluntary **target of reducing tobacco use by 30% by 2025** enshrined in the global action plan against non-communicable diseases, the COP requested the FCTC Secretariat and the WHO to hold a technical consultation before COP8 to identify necessary actions that the COP could take to ensure that the global voluntary target is achieved. The COP decision also requests that the Secretariat to collect information regarding national targets.

-**Product regulation**, the COP discussed the development of partial guidelines on Article 9&10, the regulation of waterpipe tobacco, and electronic cigarettes. For information on these decisions, please contact Deborah Arnott at ASH (UK).

Now a mature Treaty embraced by 181 countries around the world, the FCTC has reached a point where the focus is shifting from guideline development towards support for implementation. Parties are required to find solutions at the COP to complex issues that concern policy design and implementation, interactions between FCTC rules and recommendations on the one hand, and other areas such as finance, trade, agriculture, law enforcement, development assistance etc. on the other. Despite the very busy agenda and complexity of the issues at stake, Parties found ways forward to support the strengthening of FCTC implementation.

The next session of the COP will take place in Geneva in October 2018.

## Smoke Free Partnership welcomes its new partners



The Smoke Free Partnership would like to take the opportunity to warmly welcome its new Associate partner [Dutch Cancer Society](#) and its new Coalition partner [Kosovo Advocacy and Development Center](#). To view all SFP Main and Associate partners click [here](#), to view all SFP Coalition partners click [here](#)