

Inside COP11



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General opening remarks at the strategic dialogue "Healthy Planet, Healthy Future: uniting for tobacco-free generations":

"If tobacco were a virus, we would call it a pandemic. Researchers would race to develop vaccines against it. Governments and public health institutions would do everything to prevent its spread, to protect people from it, and to mitigate its economic, social and environmental impact."

Prof. Judith Mackay, Director (Asian Consultancy on Tobacco Control, Hong Kong SAR China) about the defining achievements of the WHO FCTC:

"...the convention has come from strength to strength ... Article 5.3 which is called out the tobacco industry and has accelerated global tobacco control in a way that nothing else could or has done..."

Outside COP11

Brazilian Tobacco Sector Delegation

The Brazilian non-official delegation is in Geneva to closely monitor the proceedings. The sector in Brazil has grown accustomed to surprises during COPs, largely because the country's official delegation often brings forward the most unexpected or far-reaching proposals. At COP10, for example, Brazil introduced a new agenda item that had not been previously circulated to Parties, catching many by surprise. Mindful of this history, the sector is taking no chances. Approximately 40 representatives have traveled to Geneva, prepared to respond quickly and effectively to any developments that may arise during the negotiations.



Brazilian Tobacco Sector Delegation, 17 November

What is important to understand is that, despite being the world's largest tobacco exporter and the second-largest producer, Brazil consistently adopts one of the most hard-line anti-tobacco positions in WHO FCTC COP negotiations. The influence of the Brazilian official delegation over the years is closely tied to Brazil's historic role in the creation and early development of the WHO FCTC itself. Concerns about transparency continue to surface. One example is the strict control over media participation: Brazilian media outlets are largely excluded, and for COP11 only a single Brazilian outlet has been accredited. This raises an essential question: how far can this approach go? For the sake of good governance and institutional credibility, the opacity surrounding COP proceedings must be openly addressed. Restricting public and media access not only undermines trust but may prompt legitimate questions about the legal basis for decisions that limit transparency and participation.

Daily Highlights

• Brazil submitted a plan to phase out government backing for tobacco cultivation at COP11.

[Read more](#)

• Request for Action — Restrictions on Press Freedom at COP11

[Read statement](#)

• Poland rejects WHO push to curb tobacco growing

[View statement](#)

Keyser Study and ITGA Milestones in the Evolution of Article 17

In 2007, the World Bank commissioned a landmark study on crop substitution and diversification strategies for tobacco farmers. Authored by John Keyser, this analysis—widely known as the “**Keyser study**”—remains one of the most frequently cited economic references in WHO FCTC debates concerning Article 17 (support for alternative livelihoods).

[Read Study](#)

That same year, the International Tobacco Growers’ Association (ITGA) organized its **first global conference on crop diversification**, bringing together experts, policymakers, and farmer representatives. John Keyser participated in the event, presenting the key findings of his World Bank study.

[Read Presentation](#)

WHO FCTC 20th Anniversary. How the FCTC became a reality

- **1993:** 1st African Conference on Tobacco or Health and the introduction of the concept of an international tobacco control treaty.
- **1994:** The 9th World Conference on Tobacco or Health adopts a resolution urging the UN to develop an International Tobacco Control Convention.
- **1995:** WHO Member States ask the Secretariat to assess the feasibility of creating an international tobacco treaty.
- **1996:** WHO Member States formally request the Secretariat to begin developing the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC).
- **1999:** WHO Members establish an intergovernmental negotiating body to draft and negotiate the FCTC.
- **2003:** Negotiations are finalized and the FCTC is opened for signature.
- **2005:** After ratification by 40 countries, the treaty enters into force and implementation begins.

