

5 November 2023

Hon. Dr. Saia Ma'u Piukala, Director
WHO Western Pacific Region
Ground Floor, 3 Lazaro Compound
C.S. Gatmaitan Avenue, Santa Cruz
Manila 1003 Philippines

Hon. Dr. Piukala,

On behalf of all current users of safer nicotine products in the Western Pacific Region (and beyond) we submit to you the enclosed Western Pacific Declaration.

As relevant stakeholders, and arguably the most important stakeholders, we believe that there is opportunity in the legitimate process for our contributions to be included in the process of regulation of safer nicotine products.

The FCTC treaty includes a mandate to pursue Harm Reduction as a core tobacco control policy (Article 1(d)) but we do not believe that the COP process has to date allowed for the full realisation of the benefits of harm reduction. Nor has the current process allowed for full and meaningful engagement and involvement of the main policy stakeholders - the adult consumer community - who utilise these harm-reduced products to switch away from the deadly forms of tobacco such as combustibles and unsafe oral nicotine products.

Furthermore, our regional position should be informed by our regional experience - relevant data on consumer use and behaviour. Decisions about the issue of Tobacco Harm Reduction should not be made in a vacuum but with the benefit of real-life, relevant country experience and data, such as can be provided by an actual adult consumer of safer nicotine products.

As adult consumers, we have the right to make choices that help us avoid adverse health outcomes and the right to the information to help us make those choices. People who smoke have the right not only to access less harmful nicotine products as alternatives to smoking, but to contribute to the policy making process that directly impacts their right to health and wellbeing.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to explain our issues and concerns further. We thank you in advance for your consideration and cooperation.

Sincerely,



Nancy E Loucas, Executive Coordinator
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encs.



One billion consumers of safer nicotine products ought to be the principal beneficiaries of enlightened, science-based regulatory frameworks allowing us access to the life-saving technologies of these products.

We deserve to be properly and effectively represented to and by the delegates of our respective countries, with our interests first and foremost in any policy discussion around our use of nicotine. We deserve to take our rightful place at the table during policy discussions and be treated with respect and consideration.

We call on all delegates in the Western Pacific Region (WPRO) to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, as representatives of their respective countries allow adult citizens to have access to safer alternatives to combustible and unsafe oral nicotine through risk proportionate regulation of safer nicotine products, including E-cigarettes, Heat Not Burn Tobacco and snus.

WE, here at AHRF 2023, demand for **COMPLETE TRANSPARENCY** of the process and proceedings for CoP10 (Conference of the Parties) meetings and the process of vetting representatives therein. The demand is rooted in the principles of openness, accountability, and fairness. Addressing crucial issues, such as those discussed at CoP meetings, the public and all stakeholders should have access to clear and unambiguous information about how decisions are made and actions are taken.

We urge the delegates to make sure that:


- Consumers, researchers, and the media to be actively engaged and represented at **EVERY LEVEL** within the process, extending to the highest level of delegation membership. This call for inclusivity ensures a well-rounded and transparent approach, where diverse perspectives, research insights, and media scrutiny contribute to more comprehensive and fair decision-making. By including these stakeholders at every level, we can strive for a process that is not only accountable but also better equipped to address the multifaceted challenges we face at AHRF 2023.
- Financial transparency regarding the **FUNDING** of the WHO FCTC (World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control) reflects a fundamental commitment to accountability, ethical governance, and the responsible use of resources. It underscores the importance of clarity and openness in how financial resources are managed and allocated in an organization as critical as the WHO FCTC.
- **WHO FOLLOWS THEIR MANDATE**, specifically in relation to the definition of 'tobacco control' within the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), is founded on a deep commitment to safeguarding public health and advancing evidence-based strategies to combat the global tobacco epidemic. By doing so, we prioritize the health and well-being of populations worldwide and remain committed to evidence-based, comprehensive, and equitable strategies to combat this significant public health challenge.

THE WESTERN PACIFIC DECLARATION:


- **WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC)** must center on the principles of evidence-based decision-making, transparency, and scientific rigor in its actions and policy formulation. It must adhere to the practice of openly and comprehensively considering and sharing all relevant published and peer-reviewed scientific studies, without bias regarding their source.
- **INFORMATION** must be grounded in the principles of accuracy, objectivity, and the pursuit of sound scientific knowledge within the World Health Organization (WHO). The WHO must cease the dissemination of disinformation, biased opinions, and rhetoric that is antagonistic to Tobacco Harm Reduction (THR), and instead, steadfastly follows established scientific evidence. By adhering to these principles and ceasing the dissemination of disinformation and biased opinions, the organization can enhance its effectiveness in promoting global public health and addressing the complex challenges associated with tobacco use and harm reduction.


Signed this 19th of October 2023 – Manila, Philippines

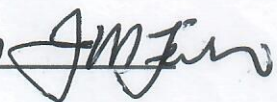

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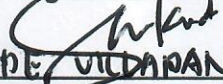

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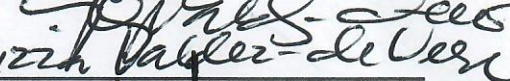

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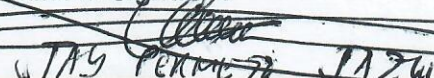

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Western Pacific Declaration

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