



**Conference of the Parties to the
WHO Framework Convention
on Tobacco Control**

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**Review of accreditation of nongovernmental
organizations with observer status to the
Conference of the Parties to the
WHO Framework Convention
on Tobacco Control**

INTRODUCTION

1. This review was conducted in accordance with Rule 31.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties and the decision taken by the Conference of the Parties at its third session (Durban, South Africa, 17–22 November 2008).¹
2. Fifty nongovernmental organizations are currently accredited as observers to the Conference of the Parties (see Annex). Of this number 49 were accredited as observers, in line with Rule 31.1 of the Rules of Procedure, as organizations that participated in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body and the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). One further nongovernmental organization was granted observer status by the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its third session,² in line with Rule 31.2 of the Rules of Procedure.
3. The Convention Secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, informed (by letter of 2 February 2010) all 50 nongovernmental organizations accredited as observers to the Conference of the Parties of the fact that the review was taking place. They were asked to confirm their wish to retain their status as observers and to submit a report outlining their activities in support of the WHO FCTC. They were requested to respond by 22 March 2010. Those organizations that had not replied by the time of the deadline were contacted again.

¹ See decision FCTC/COP3(19) on the workplan and budget for the financial period 2010–2011.

² See decision FCTC/COP3(4).

4. The review was conducted in line with the criteria outlined in Rule 31.2 of the Rules of Procedure and decision FCTC/COP2(6) of the Conference of the Parties. Rule 31.2, in particular, states that “international and regional nongovernmental organizations whose aims and activities are in conformity with the spirit, purpose and principles of the Convention, may apply for observer status, which may be granted by the Conference of the Parties, based on the report of the Secretariat, and taking into account the 17th and 18th preambular paragraphs as well as Article 5.3 of the Convention”. Decision FCTC/COP2(6) outlines, in addition, that “the nature and geographical scope of activities, as well as the financing, membership and governance” of nongovernmental organizations shall be taken into account in their accreditation as observers to the Conference of the Parties.

RESPONSES RECEIVED FROM NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

5. Of the 50 observer nongovernmental organizations that were contacted, 39 had responded by 15 July 2010. A total of 28 confirmed their wish to maintain their observer status, while 11 stated that they did not wish to do so.

6. A further 11 nongovernmental organizations did not reply to the Convention Secretariat’s letter of 2 February 2010 nor to the numerous reminders sent thereafter. Of these, nine organizations had not attended any sessions of the Conference of the Parties or those of its subsidiary bodies while two had attended at least one such session.

SECRETARIAT’S REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nongovernmental organizations wishing to maintain the status of observer to the Conference of the Parties

7. Of the 28 nongovernmental organizations that expressed a wish to maintain observer status, 24 also submitted a report on the activities that they undertake to support implementation of the Convention. These reports varied in structure and content as currently there is no specific format for such information.

8. The areas covered in the reports that were submitted included: attendance at meetings on topics related to the WHO FCTC both regionally and globally; communication and publication of information on the Convention and its instruments; organization of meetings, workshops and events; support to programmes and campaigns at country, regional and global levels; lobbying activities, particularly at the policy-making and political levels; and research. All these activities were reported in relation to implementation of the Convention.

9. These organizations and their reports were also reviewed for other relevant elements such as the geographical scope of their activities, respect for the principles contained in Article 5.3 of the Convention and the implementation guidelines adopted by the Conference of the Parties, as well as attendance at meetings of the Conference of the Parties or its subsidiary bodies.

10. A detailed review of these organizations shows that they are engaged, to varying degrees, in a range of activities that support implementation of the Convention. These activities are carried out either directly by the observer organization or through their member organizations at regional and national levels. All 24 organizations that submitted a report were found: to have aims and objectives

that are in conformity with those of the Convention; to be, to varying degrees, active at the international level with activities and membership in different regions of the world; and to demonstrate respect for the spirit and letter of Article 5.3 of the Convention in their statutes or policy. Finally, all confirmed that they wish to retain their observer status.

11. After a detailed review of these reports, the Convention Secretariat would like to recommend that observer status to the Conference of the Parties be continued for the 24 nongovernmental organizations listed below:

Consumers International; Corporate Accountability International; Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences; FDI World Dental Federation; Framework Convention Alliance on Tobacco Control; International Alliance of Women; International Association of Rural Medicine and Health; International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatics; International Commission on Occupational Health; International Council of Nurses; International Federation of Medical Students' Associations; International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations; International Organization for Standardization International Pharmaceutical Federation; International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation; International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care; Union for International Cancer Control¹; International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, Medical Women's International Association; World Federation of Public Health Associations; World Heart Federation; World Medical Association; World Organization of Family Doctors; World Self-Medication Industry.

Nongovernmental organizations wishing to maintain the status of observer to the Conference of the Parties but that did not submit a report

12. Four nongovernmental organizations expressed a wish to maintain their observer status, but have not submitted a report on activities that support implementation of the Convention. Only one of them, the International Non Governmental Coalition Against Tobacco provided the Convention Secretariat with an official letter expressing their wish to maintain observer status. The remainder communicated via e-mail.

13. **The Global Forum for Health Research** is, according to their web site, "*an independent, international organization committed to demonstrating the essential role of research and innovation for health and health equity, benefiting poor and marginalized populations*". The Global Forum "*has been engaging thousands of stakeholders in research for health from around the world, from all walks of research, funding and policy, uniting them for one common goal: improving health and health equity worldwide through research*". It is to be noted that the Global Forum attended only the first session of the Conference of the Parties.

14. **The International College of Surgeons** is, according to their web site, "*a global organization dedicated to bringing together surgeons and surgical specialists of all nations, races, and creeds to promote surgical excellence for the benefit of all of mankind and to foster fellowship worldwide*". Since the entry into force of the WHO FCTC, this organization has not participated in any of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties or its subsidiary bodies.

15. **International Council on Alcohol and Addictions** is, according to their web site, "*active in the field of dependencies and continues to be dedicated to prevent and reduce the harmful use and*

¹ Formerly International Union Against Cancer.

effects of alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and addictive behaviours on individuals, families, communities and society". Since the entry into force of the WHO FCTC this organization has not participated in any of the meetings of the Conference of the Parties or its subsidiary bodies.

16. **The International Non Governmental Coalition Against Tobacco** is, according to their web site, "*a coalition of the world's major lung, heart and cancer organizations united in our commitment to tackle the tobacco epidemic by promoting policies and delivering programmes that work*". The organization participated in the first and second sessions of the Conference of the Parties as well as one meeting of a working group established by the Conference of the Parties.

17. In the absence of formal reports from the above four organizations, it was not possible to conduct a detailed and appropriate review of: their structure, membership and governance; the nature and geographical scope of their activities; sources of funding; conformity with the spirit, purpose and principles of the Convention; and of how the organization addresses the principles of Article 5.3 and the guidelines on its implementation.

18. The Convention Secretariat would therefore like to invite the Conference of the Parties to consider the request of the four nongovernmental organizations listed below, and to decide on whether their observer status should be maintained.

The Global Forum for Health Research; the International College of Surgeons; the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions; the International Non Governmental Coalition Against Tobacco.

Nongovernmental organizations that do not wish to maintain the status of observer to the Conference of the Parties

19. Eleven nongovernmental organizations stated that they do not wish to maintain their observer status. Various reasons were given. All 11 expressed a commitment to continue supporting tobacco control.

20. Taking into account the clear statements of the organizations concerned, the Convention Secretariat would like to recommend that the Conference of the Parties discontinue the observer status of the following 11 nongovernmental organizations.

Cystic Fibrosis Worldwide, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics, International Hospital Federation, International League of Dermatological Societies, Rotary International, Soroptimist International, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, World Federation of Hemophilia, World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists, World Vision International.

Nongovernmental organizations with no or an unclear response

21. Eleven nongovernmental organizations either did not respond clearly, or did not respond at all to the repeated requests by the Convention Secretariat for a clear indication of whether they wished to maintain their status as observer to the Conference of the Parties. It is to be noted that only two of them – the International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health and the International Occupational Hygiene Association – had attended at least one session of the Conference of the Parties or its subsidiary bodies.

22. The Convention Secretariat would therefore like to recommend that observer status of the following 11 nongovernmental organizations be discontinued:

Churches' Action for Health; Commonwealth Medical Association; Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering; International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health; International Confederation of Midwives; International Council of Women; International Occupational Hygiene Association; International Union for Health Promotion and Education; World Federation of Chiropractic; World Federation of Hydrotherapy and Climatotherapy; World Federation of United Nations Associations.

OTHER POSSIBLE ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

23. The current review was conducted on the basis of elements contained in the Rules of Procedure and the subsequent decision of the Conference of the Parties concerning the accreditation of nongovernmental organizations as observers to the Conference of the Parties. The Conference may wish to consider streamlining the existing and other possible elements, if any, in a formal set of criteria in order to facilitate conducting future such reviews.

24. Similarly, with regard to new applications, the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider developing a standard form to be used and completed by nongovernmental organizations wishing to apply for observer status. This is a normal practice in many international organizations and treaty Secretariats and would facilitate the applications' review. Such a standard application form could include, inter alia, the parameters indicated in Rule 31 of the Rules of the Procedures as well as in decision FCTC/COP2(6).

25. The Conference of the Parties may also wish to consider other issues that may facilitate the future process of accreditation and review of observer status of nongovernmental organizations.

ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

26. The Conference of the Parties is invited to consider the recommendations contained in paragraphs 11, 18, 20 and 22. The Conference of the Parties may also wish to consider other issues to facilitate future reviews as indicated in paragraphs 23–25.

ANNEX

**LIST OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE STATUS OF
OBSERVER TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE WHO FCTC**

- 1 Churches' Action for Health
- 2 Commonwealth Medical Association
- 3 Consumers International
- 4 Corporate Accountability International
- 5 Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences
- 6 Cystic Fibrosis Worldwide
- 7 FDI World Dental Federation
- 8 Framework Convention Alliance on Tobacco Control
- 9 Global Forum for Health Research
- 10 Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineering
- 11 International Alliance of Women
- 12 International Association for Maternal and Neonatal Health
- 13 International Association of Agricultural Medicine and Rural Health
- 14 International Association of Logopedics and Phoniatrics
- 15 International College of Surgeons
- 16 International Commission on Occupational Health
- 17 International Confederation of Midwives
- 18 International Council of Nurses
- 19 International Council of Women
- 20 International Council on Alcohol and Addictions
- 21 International Federation of Business and Professional Women
- 22 International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics
- 23 International Federation of Medical Students' Associations
- 24 International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers & Associations
- 25 International Hospital Federation
- 26 International League of Dermatological Societies
- 27 International Non Governmental Coalition Against Tobacco
- 28 International Occupational Hygiene Association
- 29 International Organization for Standardization
- 30 International Pharmaceutical Federation
- 31 International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation
- 32 International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care
- 33 International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease
- 34 International Union for Health Promotion and Education
- 34 Medical Women's International Association
- 36 Rotary International
- 37 Soroptimist International
- 38 Union for International Cancer Control¹

¹ Formerly International Union Against Cancer.

- 39 World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts
- 40 World Federation of Chiropractic
- 41 World Federation of Hemophilia
- 42 World Federation of Hydrotherapy and Climatotherapy
- 43 World Federation of Public Health Associations
- 44 World Federation of Societies of Anesthesiologists
- 45 World Federation of United Nations Associations
- 46 World Heart Federation
- 47 World Medical Association
- 48 World Organization of Family Doctors
- 49 World Self-Medication Industry
- 50 World Vision International

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