

Indigenous peoples to the 2017 Oceania Tobacco Control Conference: Smoke free Oceania

Request for endorsement by conference participants

We, the Indigenous peoples¹ and other supporters who attended the Indigenous Tobacco Symposium ask you, the participants of the 2017 Oceania Tobacco Control Conference, to support the resolutions for action and the principles described within this declaration.

Statement/Preamble

We, the Peoples who identify as the Indigenous peoples of the lands of Oceania and the Pacific, and supporters who attended the Indigenous Tobacco Symposium at the 2017 Oceania Tobacco Control Conference note that the international evidence and experience clearly shows that:

- The magnitude and scope of commercial (non-traditional) tobacco use among Indigenous peoples is an international public health crisis.
- There is a disproportionately detrimental impact of commercial tobacco products on the health, economic and cultural wellbeing of the Indigenous peoples compared to other populations within the Pacific/Oceania.
- The regional and global spread of the promotion and sale of commercial tobacco products among Indigenous peoples is a form of exploitation.
- The use of cultural imagery, peoples and iconography to promote commercial tobacco products is a form of cultural appropriation and exploitation.
- Working together as Indigenous peoples with the support of, and in collaboration with, government and non-government organisations as well as other supporters will give a stronger and focused means of countering tobacco companies' activities to promote and sell their products.
- The experiences of Indigenous peoples with the use of tobacco products are both diverse and similar; we strongly oppose and condemn the promulgation of commercial tobacco products upon our peoples.
- Some Indigenous peoples have traditional and sacred practices in relation to tobacco use that are to be safeguarded.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) makes specific provisions regarding the needs of and obligations to Indigenous peoples.

Resolutions for action

Indigenous Tobacco Symposium attendees acknowledge the history and evolution of Indigenous peoples' tobacco control and tobacco reduction declarations, including declarations made at the 2005 Australian Tobacco Control Conference, 2007 Oceania Tobacco Control Conference and the 2006 World Conference on Tobacco or Health. Indigenous Tobacco Symposium attendees resolve to the World Health Organization, through the Western Pacific Regional Office, Council of Australian Governments Health Council and the Health Ministers of the Oceania region to:

1. Support the existing FCTC, which recognizes the disproportionate harm of commercial tobacco and the need to engage with Indigenous peoples in planning, delivering, and evaluating tobacco control, including acknowledging:
 - i. FCTC obligations in relation to Indigenous peoples, enhancing Indigenous engagement, research and comprehensive tobacco control.

¹ We understand that Indigenous peoples are self-defined groups of Indigenous peoples linked together by diverse characteristics that can include kinship, land ties, language, culture, geographic residence, historic and/or current governance systems, and other collective causes.

- ii. The need for Indigenous led tobacco control research that is beneficial for Indigenous communities.
 - iii. Practical considerations for governing, sampling and analysis of data.
- 2. Raise commercial tobacco use as a priority issue at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, acknowledging the international Indigenous commercial tobacco pandemic, as well as noting the evidence of successful reductions in the prevalence of commercial tobacco use among various Indigenous populations, and particularly non-Indigenous counterparts in countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States of America.
- 3. Ensure adequate funding for support and reinstatement of the WHO Indigenous Peoples Forum on Tobacco Use with secretariat support from the World Health Organization Western Pacific Regional Office. In particular, we endorse seeking funding to have a follow up meeting from the inaugural 2006 WHO Indigenous Peoples Forum on Tobacco Use. The forum will bring together tobacco control and public health experts from Indigenous communities around the world, providing a unique opportunity to exchange technical information and practical experience on tobacco control policies and programmes for Indigenous communities, with the goal of developing policy recommendations and strategies.
- 4. To establish an Indigenous Oceania Tobacco Control network with the aims of:
 - i. Sharing experiences, knowledge, ideas and resources, including ensuring diverse representation at Oceanian Tobacco Control Conferences.
 - ii. Promoting collaboration on regional interventions.
 - iii. Enhance capacity of participating members at all levels, including leadership and among communities.
 - iv. Raise awareness of tobacco use issues faced by Indigenous peoples.
 - v. Reporting on progress to bodies including the Western Pacific Regional Office and UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

Principles underpinning this resolutions and future actions

The Indigenous peoples of the lands of Oceania and Pacific strongly endorse the need for a collaborative approach to addressing tobacco control issues among Indigenous peoples, with other population groups, governments and non-government organisations. We acknowledge that United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples details that Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right to health, and have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. The principles underpinning collaborative action should include:

Equity and social justice. Inequities in health caused by smoking and experienced by Indigenous peoples are unjust and all measures should be taken to address these inequities.

Partnerships/Collaboration. Development and implementation of policies and interventions to address tobacco use must be undertaken in partnership with Indigenous peoples. This includes collaborations between Indigenous peoples and their governments, Indigenous peoples and non-government organisations and between Indigenous peoples from across Oceania and the Pacific.

Indigenous Leadership, Participation and Decision Making. Indigenous peoples have a right to participate at all levels, including leadership, and be involved at all levels of policy and intervention decision-making, program implementation and as end users within tobacco control.

Affirmative action. Governments and non-government organisations have an obligation to safeguard the health of Indigenous peoples from the detrimental effects of commercial tobacco use. This includes actively implementing the FCTC and safeguarding the rights of Indigenous people.