



PROTOCOL
TO ELIMINATE
ILLCIT TRADE IN
TOBACCO PRODUCTS

**Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol
to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products
Fourth session**

Geneva, Switzerland, 24–26 November 2025

6 August 2025

FCTC/MOP/4/DIV/3

Conduct of business and procedural matters

**Fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the
Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products**

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Useful documentation

[Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products](#)

[Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products](#)

[WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control](#)

[Guidelines for implementation of the WHO FCTC, and policy options and recommendations adopted by the Conference of the Parties](#)

[Understanding the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products: A guide for delegates](#)

Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC)

There is a fundamental and irreconcilable conflict between the tobacco industry's interests and public health policy interests.

The Preamble to the WHO FCTC recognizes the "need to be alert to any efforts by the tobacco industry to undermine or subvert tobacco control efforts and the need to be informed of activities of the tobacco industry that have a negative impact on tobacco control efforts".

Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC stipulates that "in setting and implementing their public health policies with respect to tobacco control, Parties shall act to protect these policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry in accordance with national law".

To protect the work of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the WHO FCTC, the Guidelines for implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC recommend the following.

- Parties should not nominate any person employed by the tobacco industry or any entity working to further its interests to serve on delegations to meetings of the COP (Recommendation 4.9).
- Parties should ensure that representatives of State-owned tobacco industry do not form part of delegations to any meetings of the COP (Recommendation 8.3).

Further, in decision FCTC/MOP1(15), the MOP decided to require Parties, when designating their representatives to the meetings of the MOP, to indicate, by any means or format of their preference, that they have observed Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and have been mindful of Recommendations 4.9 and 8.3 of the Guidelines. The MOP also adopted a screening and accreditation process for representatives of intergovernmental organizations (IGO) and nongovernmental organizations (NGO) observers, as well as for members of the media and of the public, in order to avoid any actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest at sessions of the MOP. In addition, in decision FCTC/MOP1(15), Parties are urged to remain vigilant towards other vested interests. These may be vested interests of economic and commercial actors related to the implementation of the Protocol.

More information on the Guidelines for implementation of Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC is available at:

<https://fctc.who.int/publications/m/item/guidelines-for-implementation-of-article-5.3>.

Decision FCTC/MOP1(15) Maximizing transparency of delegations from Parties and observers to the Meeting of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies and other Protocol meetings is available at:

<https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/369758/fctc-mop-1-15-en.pdf?sequence=1>.

Proceedings of the session

The conduct of business of the sessions of the MOP is governed by Rules 32–48 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

Working hours of the session are set out in the following table.

Monday 24 November 2025	
10:00–13:00	Opening of the session and first plenary meeting
15:00–18:00	Plenary meeting
Tuesday 25 November 2025	
10:00–13:00	Plenary or Committee A/B meetings
15:00–18:00	Plenary or Committee A/B meetings
Wednesday 26 November 2025	
10:00–13:00	Plenary or Committee A/B meetings
15:00–18:00	Plenary meeting and closing of the session

A maximum of two evening sessions will be convened, if necessary, from 19:00 to 22:00.

Informal regional meetings

The Convention Secretariat will make arrangements to allow the regional groups from all six WHO regions to hold informal regional meetings as follows:

- Monday 24 November, from 08:00 to 09:30
- Tuesday 25 November to Wednesday 26 November, from 08:45 to 09:45.

Information on the rooms allocated to each regional group for these meetings will be listed in the daily journal available on the WHO FCTC website.¹

Arrangements for conduct of discussion in plenary and Committee A/B meetings

Rule 32 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP states that sessions of the MOP shall be held in public, unless the MOP decides that they shall be open or restricted.

¹ [Journals](#).

Regional statements

Delegations are encouraged to opt for group or regional statements, in lieu of individual statements, and to inform the Secretaries of the plenary and/or Committee A/B (see contact information for Secretaries below) about the Party that will deliver the statement for the group or region.

Time management

For the conduct of plenary meetings, interventions by delegates will be monitored by a “traffic light”. Individual statements are limited to three minutes (330 words), and statements on behalf of a WHO region to four minutes (440 words). In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, no representative may address a session without having been given permission to speak by the President in plenary or the Chairperson in committee meetings. Interventions will be made according to a list of speakers maintained by the Convention Secretariat, and a speaker may be called to order if his or her remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion. Rule 35 of the Rules of Procedure provides further details, including in relation to the speaking time, which might be limited in session.

Drafting groups

Committees A and B may establish drafting groups as necessary, in accordance with Rule 24quinquies of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP. Usually, drafting groups are convened to allow Parties to reach consensus on a specific draft decision if it was not possible to do so in committee meetings. Each drafting group is chaired by a Party representative. The Convention Secretariat will provide support as needed to such drafting groups.

Statements under agenda item 3 (Global progress in implementation of the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, followed by a general debate)

Delegations wishing to speak in the general debate are invited to notify the Convention Secretariat as soon as possible by email to fctcgovernance@who.int with the subject line “Request for general debate statement”. Delegations are encouraged to opt for group or regional statements, in lieu of individual statements.

Delegates are invited to focus their statements on the theme for the general debate: “Justice and Prosecution: Strengthening Action to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products”.

Interpretation and statements

Interpretation will be provided in the six official languages of the United Nations (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). Delegates are requested to send a copy of their statement to interpret@who.int **at least 30 minutes in advance**. This does not prevent delegates from making changes upon delivery, but it will facilitate clarity and accuracy in all languages.

When submitting a statement by email, it should specify, both in the subject line of the email and at the top of the attached statement, the name of the country/group, the meeting (for example, plenary, Committee A or Committee B) and the number of the relevant agenda item.

Delegates are requested to deliver statements at a normal speaking pace. Rapid delivery risks impeding clarity and accuracy in interpretation. Statements provided in advance are treated as confidential.

Submissions by delegations

Delegations wishing to submit draft decisions to the plenary meeting or to one of the committee meetings are invited to send their draft via email to the Convention Secretariat (fctcgovernance@who.int) in one of the official languages at least 15 days before the opening of the session. Further, the email should specify the agenda item number under which the draft decision is tabled – for example, the subject line should read: Party x/Committee x/Agenda item x. The Convention Secretariat will then place the draft decisions on the secure and restricted online documentation portal.

In accordance with Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, proposals and amendments to proposals shall not be considered if they have been circulated less than three days before the meeting in all official languages, unless the MOP decides otherwise.

Contact information for the Secretaries of the plenary, Committee A and Committee B

Plenary contact: fctcgovernance@who.int

Committee A contact: fctcComA@who.int

Committee B contact: fctcComB@who.int

Documentation

All meeting documentation is available at:

<https://fctc.who.int/protocol/meeting-of-the-parties/sessions/fourth-session-of-the-meeting-of-the-parties>

A secure and restricted online documentation portal will be available to delegates to access in-session documentation, with a password communicated by the Convention Secretariat.

Provisional agenda

The Convention Secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, prepares the provisional agenda for each session of the MOP, and coordinates the preparation of the corresponding documents. The agenda of the MOP is governed by Rules 6–13 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

Report of the MOP

Pursuant to Rules 60 and 62 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, after the MOP, a full report containing a provisional record of all the proceedings of the Meeting is shared with the Parties. Parties have 15 days after the date of receipt of the report to inform the Convention Secretariat of any corrections they wish to have made. The report is then finalized by the Convention Secretariat and made available on the WHO FCTC website in the six official languages.

Verbatim record of plenary meetings

Pursuant to Rules 60 and 64 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, and decision FCTC/MOP3(14), the verbatim record of plenary meetings in audio file format is made available online a few months after the closure of the MOP.
