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November 20, 1984

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: Smoking and Smoking Rules at International Organizations

There is attached for the information of Executive Directors a memorandum dealing with smoking and smoking rules at international organizations. The brochure referred to as Attachment I is available only in limited quantities. Copies are available for inspection through the office of the Special Representative to the United Nations (Mr. Zegers, ext. (5)8832).

Att: (1)

Other Distribution: (without Attachment I)
Department Heads

DOCUMENTATION ON SMOKING AND ON SMOKING RULES
AT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Prepared by the Special Representative to the United Nations
November 8, 1984

In consultation with the World Health Organization (WHO), documentation has been prepared on: (a) the effects of tobacco smoking; (b) international action to combat the effects of smoking; (c) current practices with respect to smoking in meetings of international, intergovernmental organizations with formal ties to the United Nations.

The effects of tobacco smoking are discussed in attachment 1, a publication of the World Health Organization entitled "Controlling the Smoking Epidemic", Report of the WHO Expert Committee on Smoking Control, Technical Report Series 636.

International action to combat the effects of smoking is reflected in attachment 2 containing Resolution WHA 33.35 of the Thirty-Third World Health Assembly, entitled "WHO Programme on Smoking and Health", adopted after the publication of the previously-mentioned report of the WHO Expert Committee; and in attachment 3, a letter from Dr. Halfdan Mahler, Director-General of the World Health Organization to United Nations Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar transmitting in an annex the Conference Recommendations of the Fifth World Conference on Smoking and Health, held in Winnipeg, Canada, July 10-15, 1983. In his letter of transmittal to the UN Secretary-General, Dr. Mahler puts particular emphasis on the need to act on the first priority set by the Conference: "to establish non-smoking and the right to a smoke-free environment as the norm." He also calls upon the United Nations to ban smoking at its meetings and to set an example for the specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

Current practices with respect to smoking in meetings of international, intergovernmental organizations are reviewed in attachment 4, a survey of smoking rules in a number of such international organizations, large as well as smaller, and in various international locations. The results show a variety of practices with smoking bans recently on the increase.

Attachments (4)



23 May 1980

WHO'S PROGRAMME ON SMOKING AND HEALTH

The Thirty-third World Health Assembly:

Recalling resolutions EB45.R9, WHA23.32, EB47.R42, WHA24.48, EB53.R31, WHA29.55, and WHA31.56, concerning the health hazards of tobacco smoking and WHO's role towards the limitation of this harmful habit;

Noting the report of the WHO Expert Committee on Smoking Control;¹

Reiterating its firm conviction that the effect of tobacco smoking is now a major public health problem in all industrialized countries and in many developing countries and that it will become so in the near future in all other developing countries unless action is taken now;

Mindful of the ill-effects of smoking particularly on risk groups such as pregnant women, lactating mothers and children;

Seriously concerned about the aggressive promotional drives for the sale of cigarettes that occur in developing as well as developed countries, thus inducing the new generations to take up the habit of smoking;

Alarmed by the fact that advertising practices of psychological means in both industrialized and developing countries have the effect of inducing and perpetuating smoking habits especially among youth;

Encouraged by the existence of total bans, restrictions or limitations on tobacco advertising in several countries;

Noting encouraging signs of expanded national activities and of increasing public awareness of the harmful health effects of cigarette smoking in many countries, partly as a result of WHO's efforts and of this year's World Health Day on "Smoking or Health: the Choice is Yours";

Realizing that national and international strategies to combat the spreading of the habit of smoking must be carried out on a continuous, long-term basis;

1. URGES Member States:

(1) to strengthen, and to initiate where lacking, smoking control strategies outlined in the above-mentioned resolutions, laying special emphasis on educational approaches particularly with respect to youth and on measures to ban, restrict or limit advertising of tobacco products;

(2) to support WHO's action in the field of smoking and health;

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Technical Report Series, No. 636, 1979.

WHA33.35
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1. REQUESTS the Director-General:

- (1) to further develop an effective WHO action programme on smoking and health, clearly defining lines of responsibility and priority areas, and taking into account the multidisciplinary and intersectoral character of the relationship between smoking and health;
- (2) to ensure that WHO plays a leading role in coordinating international activities and to strengthen collaboration with other United Nations Agencies and with relevant non-governmental organizations, and, particularly, to pursue the study on crop diversification in tobacco-growing areas in collaboration with FAO;
- (3) to collaborate with Member States in their efforts to reduce smoking;
- (4) to consider problems caused, by the marketing and consumption of tobacco particularly in developing countries;
- (5) to mobilize financial and other resources for the implementation of the programme;
- (6) to report on progress of this programme at the Thirty-Fifth World Health Assembly.

Seventeenth plenary meeting, 23 May 1980
A33/VR/17

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NCD-S14/370/1

Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar
Secretary-General
United Nations
New York, N.Y. 10017
Etats-Unis d'Amérique

3 October 1983

Dear Mr. Perez de Cuellar,

I refer to my letter of 2 May 1983 in which I brought to your attention the efforts that the World Health Organization is making to try to stem the spreading of the worldwide epidemic of tobacco smoking and of its seriously harmful, and costly, public health consequences.

The future prospect, for the developing countries in particular, is particularly bleak as, in the words of a WHO Expert Committee, "...failing immediate action, smoking diseases will appear in developing countries before communicable diseases and malnutrition have been controlled and the gap between rich and poor countries will thus be further expanded."

The Fifth World Conference on Smoking and Health took place in Winnipeg, Canada, from 10 to 15 July 1983, under the co-sponsorship of the Canadian Government and of Canadian medical organizations, the World Health Organization, and international non-governmental organizations. The recommendations that issued from the consensus of one thousand participants from 80 countries are attached for your information. I am sure you will notice that first among the top priority recommendations to be carried out internationally as swiftly as possible is that "the primary objective of international and national smoking control programmes should be to establish non-smoking and the right to a smoke-free atmosphere as the norm." There follow other recommendations on which WHO and other United Nations agencies are expected to act.

As I emphasized in my previous letter to you, the United Nations represents a tremendous moral force and has an exemplary role. On account of the health consequences and of the growing social unacceptability of smoking I hope it will be possible for you to find ways whereby smoking is not permitted at any of the meetings that are held at United Nations Centres. The many participants at United Nations meetings who are non-smokers and who have to work in a smoke-polluted atmosphere would certainly appreciate this socially sensitive and sensible line of action.

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Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar
UN, New York
NCD-S14/370/1

Attachment 3
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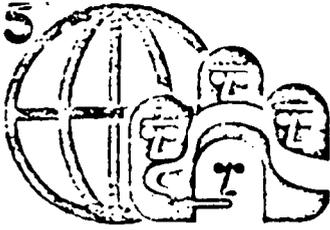
Smoking has been successfully banned at all WHO meetings for the past several years. If smoking were likewise to be banned at all United Nations meetings in Geneva, New York and other United Nations centres, as well as in meetings of the ACC and its subsidiary bodies, this would be an example to follow and an encouragement, not only for all the bodies and Specialized Agencies of the United Nations system, but also for all Member States to work towards the gradual, but necessary and meritable elimination of widespread tobacco smoking as a major avoidable public health problem.

I know that you have already taken some concrete steps in this direction including your consultation with the regional groups and I am most grateful to you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

H. Mahler, M.D.
Director-General

P.S. I was just informed that the General Assembly adopted the recommendation that smoking should be prohibited in small conference rooms and should be discouraged in large conference rooms. I wish to thank you for taking such energetic steps in response to my letter of 2 May and am sure you will continue to support WHO's efforts in this field.



FIFTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON SMOKING AND HEALTH
Winnipeg, Canada, July 10th - 15th, 1983

CINQUIÈME CONFERENCE MONDIALE SUR L'USAGE DU TABAC ET LA SANTE
Winnipeg, Canada, du 10 au 15 juillet, 1983

QUINTA CONFERENCIA MUNDIAL SOBRE EL TABACO Y LA SALUD
Winnipeg, Canada, del 10 al 15 de julio de 1983

Conference Secretariat
Adresse du secretariat
Direccion de la secretaria

Box 3159, Terminal P.O.
Ottawa, Canada, K1G 3H7
Telephono: 613-722-1744

CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Organisation Mondiale de la Santé
Société et Fédération Internationale de Cardiologie
Union Internationale contre le Cancer
Union Internationale contre la Tuberculose
Union Internationale d'Éducation pour la Santé

Organizado por:
Société Canadienne du Cancer
Association Canadienne des Maladies du Cœur
Association Pulmonaire du Canada
Gouvernement du Canada

World Health Organization
International Society and Federation of Cardiology
International Union Against Cancer
International Union Against Tuberculosis
International Union on Health Education

Organizado por:
Canadian Cancer Society
Canadian Heart Foundation
Canadian Lung Association
Government of Canada

Organización Mundial de la Salud
Sociedad y Federación Internacional de Cardiología
Unión Internacional contra el Cancer
Unión Internacional contra la Tuberculosis
Unión Internacional de Educación para la Salud

Organizado por:
Sociedad Canadiense de Cancer
Fundación Canadiense del Corazón
Asociación Canadiense del Pulmón
El Gobierno de Canadá

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following is a listing of top priority recommendations to be carried out internationally as swiftly as possible. These recommendations are based on a synthesis of responses to the special input form completed by Conference participants as well as other suggestions contributed.

The International Liaison Committee on Smoking and Health has considered and endorsed the recommendations as set forth below:

- (1) That the primary objective of international and national smoking control programs should be to establish NON-SMOKING AND THE RIGHT TO A SMOKE-FREE ATMOSPHERE AS THE NORM.
- (2) That the Ministries of Health of all countries be asked to report to the 1987 World Conference on Smoking and Health on progress made toward each of the goals set out in the WHO Expert Committee on Smoking Control recommendations of 1978, particularly in relation to advertising, health warnings, sales to minors, and health education programs.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman.

- (3) That all countries be asked to measure the prevalence of local tobacco usage and to report findings to the 6th World Conference on Smoking and Health. The standardized measuring system developed by WHO and UICC is recommended for this purpose.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman via WHO and UICC.

- (4) That all countries be urged to form a National Smoking Control Coordinating Body, representing government and non-government agencies by 1987.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman via WHO and international agencies.

- (5) That world religious leaders and groups be asked to support actively the international program on smoking control.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman.

- (6) That this 5th World Conference on Smoking and Health urge all governments to heed the Honourable Monique Bégin's call for regular increases in taxation as part of a comprehensive program to reduce smoking and improve health.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman.

- (7) That production and export of cigarettes with a tar yield of more than 20 milligrams cease worldwide. This upper limit should be reviewed in 1987 and progressively reduced. Yields of nicotine and other hazardous substances should be similarly reduced.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman via WHO international agencies.

- (8) That all cigarettes and tobacco products sold worldwide should carry a health warning and precise labelling of tar, nicotine and carbon monoxide - this is to include duty-free cigarettes.
- (9) That all international health agencies, including WHO, be urged to demonstrate their commitment to smoking control by substantially increasing the resources made available for this purpose.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman to WHO and international agencies.

- (10) That the Director General of WHO be asked to open the Sixth World Conference on Smoking and Health and to report progress on the development of WHO's smoking control program at that time.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman and International Liaison Committee on Smoking and Health.

- (11) That WHO, possibly in cooperation with the International Agency on Research and Cancer (IARC), be requested to organize an assessment of the size of the global tobacco problem in terms of mortality, morbidity, tobacco production and sales; and to report this to the 1987 World Conference on Smoking and Health along with long-term projections.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman to WHO and IARC.

- (12) That regular international planning meetings be held of selected leaders of smoking control programs from around the world.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman to international agencies.

- (13) That UN agencies be urged to cease supporting tobacco growing and to initiate⁵¹ programs to develop alternative crops. These agencies are requested also to examine the deforestation which occurs as a consequence of tobacco production.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman to UN agencies.

- (14) That a world NON-SMOKING DAY be held each year, commencing in 1984.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman via WHO and international agencies. Date to be set by International Liaison Committee on Smoking and Health.

- (15) That national research institutes be requested to intensify their research activities in the area of smoking and health.

Action to be taken by Conference chairman to WHO and international agencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MEETING OF THIRD WORLD DELEGATES

At an especially convened meeting, some 40 of the Third World delegates to the Conference recorded their appreciation of the opportunities it had afforded to broaden their knowledge of smoking control but regretted the absence of opportunities to focus in more detail on certain areas peculiar to their countries. They noted too the need to enlist the aid of non-governmental organizations to support efforts of health ministries in the field of smoking control.

The meeting made the following specific proposals:

1. Future conferences should be organized in a manner which allows time for the discussion of subjects specific to certain regions, economic groupings or political organization without conflicting with other agenda items - for instance traditional forms of tobacco use; control of smoking in developing countries with state monopolies etc.
2. A coordinator should be nominated to coordinate those parts of the program relevant to the Third World participants.
3. Support should be given to the establishment of an international network of ngos in the field of smoking control in the developing countries. The representative of the Consumer Association of Penang, Malaysia offered to provide initial coordination for this purpose. In support of this it was noted that for future smoking control workshops in developing countries, funds should be sought to permit the participation of representatives of such organizations and that support should also be sought for the establishment and operation of such a network.

Smoking Rules at A Number of International Organizations

A spot check by the Fund's Representative to the United Nations of smoking rules in effect at ten international organizations provides the following information as representative for current practices. It should be noted that organizations which introduced a smoking ban in their meetings did so mostly in the last three years.

United Nations Headquarters, New York. Smoking has always been forbidden in the UN General Assembly Plenary Hall. As of September 1983, smoking has also been forbidden in all smaller conference rooms at UN Headquarters, holding up to 80 persons. In the four large UN Headquarters committee rooms, suitable for plenary committee meetings and holding up to 300 persons, signs are posted "Smoking is discouraged." It is left up to the Chairman of the meeting to enforce or not to enforce this semi-ban.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Rome. Smoking is banned in all meeting rooms.

World Health Organization (WHO), Geneva. Smoking is banned in all meeting rooms.

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Geneva. Smoking is banned in all meeting rooms (from January 1984).

UNCTAD, Geneva. Smoking is forbidden in smaller meeting rooms, "discouraged" (as at UN Headquarters) in larger meeting rooms.

International Labour Office (ILO), Geneva. No action on smoking has been taken. Smoking is permitted in all meetings.

GATT, Geneva. The subject of a smoking ban has been on the agenda of the GATT Council for some time but has, so far, not been discussed.

International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Geneva. No smoking ban has formally been adopted but delegates are "kindly requested" not to smoke (no ashtrays are provided).

UNESCO, Paris. Smoking is permitted in all meetings.

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Montreal. In the Executive Council room smoking is tolerated. In smaller meeting rooms, holding up to 50 persons, it is banned.