



Convened by the Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control (GGTC)

Open Statement from the Global Youth Voices (GYV) on the Plastic Treaty and Tobacco Industry Interference

Distinguished delegates,

We, the **Global Youth Voices (GYV)**, recognize the progress made in addressing plastic pollution as [negotiations](#) on the UN plastics treaty conclude in Busan, Korea. However, as youth who will inherit the planet, we are concerned that the failure to agree on a treaty has delayed our right to a better future. The [Chair's draft](#), set to be the starting point when negotiations continue next year, does not include space for an **immediate ban on cigarette butts**, despite their significant contribution to plastic pollution and status as one of the most [toxic](#) and widespread forms of waste.

These items—often deceptively marketed as a safety feature—pose a severe risk of plastic ingestion in humans and contribute to toxic contamination in the environment. Without the cigarette filter ban, the treaty could be misused to allow the tobacco industry to further its harmful influence. The [treaty provisions](#) allowing for **product redesign**, Extended Producer Responsibility ([EPR](#)), and **incentives**, all run counter to our [call](#) to make the tobacco industry accountable and liable for the harms to the people and the planet, as well as the future generation. The Tenth Session of the Conference of the Parties ([COP10](#)) to the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ([WHO FCTC](#)) has called out **EPR** as a form of tobacco Corporate Social Responsibility ([CSR](#)) or a greenwashing tactic designed to shift the burden of responsibility from the industry onto society. Such efforts are a diversion from the real issue: the environmental and public health crisis created by tobacco products.

The tobacco industry has a well-documented history of prioritizing profit over people, particularly when it comes to our health.

We urge governments to **ensure that the tobacco industry is excluded from any role** in influencing the negotiations and implementing the plastic treaty. [CSR](#) and [EPR](#) programs pushed by the tobacco industry are nothing more than attempts to deflect accountability. Governments must ensure that these companies, per the polluters pay principle, bear the financial responsibility for cleaning up the environmental damage they cause by its toxic products, including cigarette butts and other waste, rather than enabling them to profit from false claims of environmental responsibility.



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We call on governments to **align their efforts to combat** plastic pollution with their commitments under the **WHO FCTC**. The tobacco industry must not be allowed to manipulate environmental policies to serve its interests. This includes rejecting any tobacco-related initiatives, such as ‘so-called’ **eco-friendly filters**, which falsely claim environmental benefits but perpetuate addiction and entice new users. The WHO FCTC Guidelines instruct governments to reject the participation, sponsorship, and financial contributions of the tobacco industry in any public health-related initiative, and exclude the tobacco industry from policy making process.

As youth, we cannot be ignored while our futures are shaped by the profits of the tobacco industry. We call on governments, civil society, and international organizations to ensure that the plastic treaty serves its true purpose of protecting the environment without enabling the tobacco industry to continue exploiting our communities and our ecosystems.

About the GYV

The Global Youth Voices (GYV) is a movement that represents youth coalitions and organizations from across the globe that seek to make the tobacco industry pay for the harms caused to the planet and its people, not only for those in this generation but also future generations. GYV’s previous statements and initiatives have been recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and at the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Conference of the Parties. The Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control convenes and provides technical assistance to GYV.