



The New Nicotine Challenge: Preventing a New Wave of Youth Addiction

Ministerial Roundtable at the 11th COP FCTC, hosted by Belgium

17 November 2025 – 13:30-14:30 – Amphitheatre D CIGG

In recent years, the use of nicotine-containing products that do not involve tobacco combustion—such as e-cigarettes—has increased rapidly, particularly among adolescents and young adults. These products are often highly addictive, contain elevated levels of nicotine, are broadly commercially available, and are marketed – including on social media - in ways that appeal directly to youth through flavored variants, sleek designs, and colorful packaging.

Despite marketing claims, the evidence in respect of these products does not support the conclusion that they are effective for cessation at the population level. Instead, evidence is mounting regarding their harmful impact on public health, especially in initiating nicotine addiction among new generations.

Pursuant to Article 5.2(b) of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), Parties have an obligation to adopt and implement measures to prevent and reduce nicotine addiction, and the World Health Organization has repeatedly underscored the urgency of comprehensive regulation of all nicotine products, not just traditional tobacco. In this context, there is a growing need for coordinated, future-oriented policy responses, especially in international frameworks such as the WHO FCTC.

By convening this ministerial roundtable, Belgium seeks to build international momentum for measures with proven effectiveness to implement the obligation in Article 5.2(b) of the WHO FCTC and to protect youth against this new wave of vaping and other nicotine products.

As stated by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO: “Without bold action, the global tobacco epidemic, already killing around 8 million people each year, will continue to be driven by addiction dressed up with appealing flavors.”

Agenda

Prof. Emily Banks will provide an update on the scientific evidence on the current situation and risks related to vaping and the use of other nicotine products.

Thereafter, **Mr. Frank Vandenbroucke**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Social Affairs and Public Health of Belgium, and other speakers will share their insights on the topic:

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General (tbc)

Ms. Sandra Gallina, Director-General for Health and Food Safety, European Commission (tbc)

Mr. Pierre N’Gou Dimba, Minister of Health, Ivory Coast (tbc)

Dr. Dzulkefly bin Ahmad, Minister of Health, Malaysia (tbc)

Dr. Cristina Lustemberg, Minister of Health, Uruguay

The session will be moderated by **Ms. Imogen Foulkes**.

Format: Open to the COP/FCTC participants and media – Livestreaming will be foreseen

Language: Interpretation will be provided in English, French and Spanish