



# Understanding the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

*A guide for delegates*



**PROTOCOL**  
TO ELIMINATE  
ILLCIT TRADE IN  
TOBACCO PRODUCTS



**FCTC**

WHO FRAMEWORK CONVENTION  
ON TOBACCO CONTROL

SECRETARIAT



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A guide for delegates



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## Introduction

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This document is based on provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products. It has been developed mainly for new delegates to the MOP who may represent Parties or may be attending as observers. It is intended to help delegates understand how the MOP operates, as well as its practices and procedures.

This document does not address the substance of discussions at the MOP. Instead, it provides practical information to facilitate coordination among delegations, the Secretariat of the WHO FCTC and any other Party or observer during the MOP.

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### Basic documents available in the six official languages of the United Nations

[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 COP](#)



## 1. Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

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The Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products is the first protocol to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and is an international treaty with the objective of eliminating all forms of illicit trade in tobacco products through a package of measures to be taken by countries acting in cooperation with each other. The Protocol builds upon and complements Article 15 of the WHO FCTC, which addresses means of countering illicit trade in tobacco products, a key aspect

of a comprehensive tobacco control policy. It was adopted by consensus on 12 November 2012 at the Fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the WHO FCTC and entered into force on 25 September 2018.

The Protocol was developed in response to the growing international illicit trade in tobacco products, which poses a serious threat to public health. Illicit trade increases the accessibility and affordability of tobacco products, thus fuelling the tobacco epidemic and undermining tobacco control policies. It also causes substantial losses in government revenues, and at the same time contributes to the funding of transnational criminal activities.





## 2. Treaty governing body and its subsidiary bodies

### 2.1 The Meeting of the Parties

The Meeting of the Parties (MOP) is the governing body of the Protocol and is comprised of all Parties to the treaty. It regularly reviews the implementation of the Protocol and makes decisions necessary to promote its effective implementation. The MOP may also adopt protocols, annexes and amendments to the Protocol.

The conduct of the sessions of the MOP is governed by the Rules of Procedure<sup>1</sup> of the MOP to the Protocol, which may be found on the WHO FCTC website.

Unless otherwise decided by the Meeting of the Parties, regular sessions of the MOP are held every two years.<sup>2</sup> At each regular session, the MOP decides on the dates and venue of its next regular session. According

to the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, extraordinary sessions of the MOP may be held as may be deemed necessary by the MOP or at the request of any Party.

In accordance with Rule 32 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, sessions of the MOP shall be public, unless the MOP decides that they shall be open or restricted. In accordance with Rule 24quinquies of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, the meetings of the committees shall be held in public unless the committee concerned decides that they shall be open or restricted.

### 2.2 The Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties

Pursuant to Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, the MOP elects its President, as well as five Vice-Presidents – one of whom shall act as Rapporteur – at each regular session. Together, these officers constitute the Bureau of the MOP. Each of the WHO regions shall be represented by one Bureau member.

Who can attend each type of session or meeting		
Public sessions or meetings	Open sessions or meetings	Restricted sessions or meetings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parties</li> <li>States and regional economic integration organizations that are not Parties</li> <li>The Convention Secretariat</li> <li>Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) accredited as observers</li> <li>Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) accredited as observers</li> <li>Accredited media</li> <li>Members of the public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parties</li> <li>States and regional economic integration organizations that are not Parties</li> <li>The Convention Secretariat</li> <li>IGOs accredited as observers</li> <li>NGOs accredited as observers</li> <li>Accredited media, unless the MOP decides otherwise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parties</li> <li>Essential Convention Secretariat staff</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> <https://fctc.who.int/resources/publications/m/item/rules-of-procedure-of-the-meetingof-the-parties>.

<sup>2</sup> In the context of the restrictions imposed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Second session of the MOP was postponed by one year. Due to security reasons in the host country, the Third session of the MOP was held during a de minimis virtual session, followed by a resumed in-person session in the subsequent year.

The officers of the Bureau shall commence their term of office at the closure of the session of the MOP at which they are elected. They shall serve until the closure of the following regular session of the MOP, including for any intervening extraordinary session.

Pursuant to Rule 24quater of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, at each regular session of the MOP, the Parties in each WHO region shall elect a regional coordinator, whose term will extend to the closing of the next session of the MOP.

In the two-year period between regular sessions of the MOP – known as the intersessional period – the Bureau meets three times (or more, if necessary) to undertake its work, such as to prepare, in collaboration with the Convention Secretariat, the provisional agenda for each session of the MOP, provide guidance to the Convention Secretariat on implementation of the workplans and budgets adopted by the MOP, and in the preparation of reports, recommendations and draft decisions submitted to the MOP. It reviews the applications of NGOs that apply for observer status to the MOP and makes recommendations in that regard. The functions of the Bureau are described in Rules 6, 9, 19 and 21–24 and 24ter of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, and its mandates are further articulated in decisions of the MOP.

Regional coordinators attend meetings of the Bureau in an observer capacity and perform the following functions: (a) liaise with the officer of the Bureau representing the region and facilitate consultations with the Parties in the region between the sessions of the MOP with a view to informing the work of the Bureau and keeping Parties informed of the Bureau's work; (b) receive working documents or proposals of the Bureau and ensure that they are circulated to the

Parties in the region; (c) collect and send comments on such documents or proposals to the officer of the Bureau; and (d) act as a channel for the exchange of information, including a copy of invitations to the meetings for the implementation of the Protocol, and coordination of activities with other regional coordinators. The functions of the regional coordinators are articulated in Rule 24quater of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

The meetings of the Bureau are usually held in Geneva, Switzerland, at the seat of the Convention Secretariat.

### 2.3 Working groups and expert groups

In accordance with Article 33 of the Protocol and Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, the MOP may establish such subsidiary bodies as are necessary to achieve the objective of the Protocol. The MOP developed a practice of establishing working groups and may establish expert groups with specific mandates and, as appropriate, terms of reference.

In the case of a working group, after notification by the Convention Secretariat, Parties can express interest to participate and nominate representatives.

In the case of an expert group, individuals are nominated in accordance with the terms of reference and the required expertise. Experts attend expert group meetings in an individual capacity and not as representatives of their country.

Both types of groups report to the MOP, and their work may be expected, but not limited, to result in the development of guidelines, policy options and recommendations for the implementation of various articles of the Protocol.

### 3. The Secretariat of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

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Established in 2007, the Convention Secretariat serves as the secretariat of both the WHO FCTC and of the Protocol. The WHO FCTC was developed in response to the globalization of the tobacco epidemic and is an evidence-based treaty that reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standard of health. The WHO FCTC was adopted on 21 May 2003 by the World Health Assembly and entered into force on 27 February 2005.

The Convention Secretariat is an entity hosted by WHO, but it has its own mandate and a governance arrangement distinct from WHO. The Convention Secretariat leads on WHO FCTC and Protocol matters under the guidance of the COP and of the MOP, and their respective Bureaus.

The functions of the Convention Secretariat are articulated in Article 24 of the WHO FCTC and Article 34 of the Protocol, as well as in the Rules of Procedure of the COP and of the MOP. Its work is further defined in decisions of the COP and of the MOP, including the workplans and budgets adopted by the COP and MOP.

The Convention Secretariat mandate includes serving the COP and the MOP as well as their Bureaus and subsidiary bodies, assisting Parties in implementing the provisions of the WHO FCTC and the Protocol, assessing progress and sharing knowledge on implementation of the treaties, promoting international cooperation, and raising awareness and mobilizing resources.

Taking into account the specific provisions of the WHO FCTC and the Protocol, the Convention Secretariat abides by strict policies to prevent and address conflicts of interest involving the tobacco industry, those working to further its interest and other vested commercial interests.



## 4. Participation, credentials and registration

In addition to the Parties, observers such as States and regional economic integration organizations that are not Parties to the Protocol, international IGOs and international and regional NGOs are also entitled to attend the MOP and take part in the discussions. Accredited media and members of the public may also attend certain sessions of the MOP, subject to the Rules of Procedure of the MOP and decisions of the MOP.

### 4.1 Parties to the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

All Parties to the Protocol are invited to participate in the sessions of the MOP and enjoy equal rights.

In accordance with Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, each Party shall be represented by a delegation consisting of a head of delegation and such other accredited representatives, alternative representatives and advisers, as it may require. Each Party would designate the function and roles of representatives within its delegation.

Party delegates are granted access to public, open and restricted sessions.

Delegations use their country nameplates to request the floor. This is done by turning the nameplate to the vertical position in its holder. The intervention can be made when the President or the Chairpersons of the committees call the country name. A request to raise a point of order is made by forming a “T” with the nameplate and one arm.

In accordance with Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, decisions on budgetary and financial matters shall be taken by consensus and in conformity with the provisions of the Protocol. For all other

decisions, the MOP shall make every effort to reach agreement by consensus. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted, the treaty provides for voting, as a last resort. Each Party shall have one vote; regional economic integration organizations, in matters within their competence, shall exercise their right to vote with a number of votes equal to the number of their Member States that are Parties to the Protocol.

Curious to know when a country became a Party to the Protocol? Visit the United Nations Treaty Collection website.<sup>3</sup>

### 4.2 Observers to the Meeting of the Parties

Observer status to the MOP is governed by Rules 29 to 31 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

#### (a) States and regional economic integration organizations that are not Parties to the Protocol

Parties to the Convention that are not Parties to the Protocol and States that are not Parties to the Convention may attend the sessions of the MOP as observers. Regional economic integration organizations, as defined in the treaty, that are not Parties to the Protocol, may also do so.

States and regional economic integration organizations that are not Parties may participate without the right to vote in public or open meetings and may request the floor to speak after the Parties.

#### (b) International intergovernmental organizations and international and regional nongovernmental organizations

IGOs and NGOs that have been granted observer status to the MOP may participate without the right to vote in public or open meetings and may speak after the Parties, followed by the States and regional economic integration organizations that are not Parties to the Protocol. NGO observers take the floor after the IGO observers.

3 [https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtldsg\\_no=IX-4-a&chapter=9&clang=\\_en](https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=TREATY&mtldsg_no=IX-4-a&chapter=9&clang=_en).



### 4.3 Members of the public and media

A limited number of members of the public may attend the public meetings, which may be plenary and committee meetings, in accordance with Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

Attendance is granted by the Convention Secretariat on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to meeting the requirements of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, and further decisions of the MOP.

Representatives of the media must follow an accreditation procedure, as decided by the MOP. Accredited media may attend public and open meetings, unless the MOP decides otherwise, in accordance with Rules 2 and 32 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

### 4.4 Credentials

Credentials shall be issued by the Head of State or Government, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Health, or any other competent government authority, or, in the case of a regional economic integration organization, by the competent authority of that organization, in accordance with Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP. Credentials should be issued in an official diplomatic note or letter prepared on official letterhead, and appropriately dated, signed and/or stamped.

Credentials shall be submitted via the registration system during registration.

The MOP formally accepts representatives of Parties by recognizing the validity of their credentials and by adopting a decision on credentials in a plenary meeting. Representatives of Parties are entitled to participate provisionally in the session, pending a decision of the MOP to accept their credentials, in accordance with Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

For IGO and NGO observers, a nomination letter signed by the head of the organization shall be submitted to the Convention Secretariat.

### 4.5 Registration

Each delegate to the MOP must register via the online registration system. The credentials of Parties, States and regional economic integration organizations that are not Parties to the Convention, as well as letters of nominations for IGO and NGO observers, must be submitted through the online registration system. The registration system opens at least four months prior to the opening of the session. The link to the registration system is sent to Parties and observers in due course.

The registered delegations are invited to collect their badges the day prior to the opening of the session or on the morning of the opening of the session.

The members of the public and the media also submit their applications to attend the MOP in the online registration system.

### 4.6 Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and its Guidelines for implementation

The Preamble of 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”.

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

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.

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 Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies or any other bodies established pursuant to decisions of the Conference of the Parties. (Recommendation 4.9)
- Parties should ensure that representatives of State-owned tobacco industry do not form part of delegations to any meetings of the Conference of the Parties, its subsidiary bodies or any other bodies established pursuant to decisions of the Conference of the Parties. (Recommendation 8.3)

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 (accreditation document or separate letter), that they have observed Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and have been mindful of the recommendations 4.9 and 8.3 of the Guidelines.

Further, in that decision, the MOP adopted a screening and accreditation process for representatives of IGO and NGO observers, as well as for members of the media and of the public. These categories of participants must submit a Declaration of Interests form in advance of the meeting.

The requirements of decision FCTC/MOP1(15) are incorporated in the online registration system.

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 Article 5.3 and its Guidelines for implementation 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>.

## 5. The Meeting of the Parties at work

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The debates and discussions under agenda items are supported by reports produced by the Bureau of the MOP, subsidiary bodies (expert and working groups) established by the MOP, the Convention Secretariat, WHO, or other international agency or body upon the invitation of the MOP.

### 5.1 Functions of the Convention Secretariat to support the Meeting of the Parties

The functions of the Convention Secretariat during the MOP are defined in Rules 14 and 15 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP. The overall responsibility for organizing the MOP resides with the Head of the Convention Secretariat.

The Convention Secretariat is responsible for the overall organization and smooth functioning of the MOP, in coordination with WHO and external partners, including host country governments, when applicable.

The Convention Secretariat ensures that legal support is provided to the MOP. The Secretaries of Committee A and Committee B, who are members of the Convention Secretariat, are responsible for supporting the Chairpersons with the conduct of business in the respective committees and overseeing the finalization of the reports of the committees.

### 5.2 Conduct of business

The proceedings of the MOP sessions are governed by Rules 32 to 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

MOP sessions usually run from Monday to Thursday, from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 15:00 to 18:00, with a lunch break between the two meetings.

Evening meetings may be convened, if necessary, from 19:00 to 22:00. The first day opens with a plenary meeting.

On the second day, it is general practice that the MOP breaks into Committee A and Committee B, each of which deals with specific matters related to the Protocol. Additional plenary meetings may be held during the course of the session.

The last day closes with the final plenary.

### 5.3 Documentation

Official documents of the MOP are available in the six official and working languages of the MOP. The provisional agenda together with other conference documents are available at least 75 days before the opening of the session on the WHO FCTC website and the MOP software application.

**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.

**Practical guide for participants:** The Convention Secretariat issues practical information for participants to the MOP, with detailed information on the venue, visa requirements and logistical information.

**Conduct of business and procedural matters:** The Convention Secretariat provides delegates with a participation guide outlining the conduct of business and procedural matters for the MOP. This document highlights key elements to optimize engagement and ensure effective participation of delegates in the sessions.

**Journals:** The daily journal of the MOP contains the most up-to-date information on meetings and events scheduled during the session. It also includes procedural summaries of discussions.

A preliminary journal is published before the opening of the MOP. The journals are available, in the six official languages, on the WHO FCTC website and on the MOP software application.













**Report of the MOP:** After the MOP, a provisional report of all the proceedings of the session 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 records of plenary meetings:** The verbatim records of plenary meetings in audio file format are made available online after the closure of the MOP.

#### 5.4 High-level event

The agenda of MOP sessions may include a high-level event such as a high-level segment, a strategic dialogue and/or an “invited speaker(s)”. The objective of such an event is to bring together senior officials such as Heads of State or Heads of Government, ministers from various ministries and heads of United Nations agencies to raise the profile of the Protocol and discuss the implementation of the treaty.

#### 5.5 The general debate

The general debate, accommodated under the agenda item entitled “Global progress in implementation of the Protocol, followed by a general debate”, allows ministers of health, high-level officials or heads of delegations and regional groups to deliver their statements.

Since the First session of the MOP, it has become a practice for the general debate to focus on a theme.

**The speakers list:** The general debate is the only time during the MOP when the Convention Secretariat establishes a speakers list in advance. In this regard, governments, IGOs and NGOs wishing to speak on developments in the implementation of the treaty are invited to notify the Convention Secretariat as soon as possible.

Interventions are monitored by a “traffic light”. Individual statements (of Parties, States non-Parties, and IGO and NGO observers) are limited to three minutes (330 words) and

statements on behalf of a WHO region or a group to four minutes (440 words). IGOs and NGOs will also be invited to make statements after Parties and States non-Parties.

#### 5.6 Organization of work

The adoption of the agenda and the organization of work are generally the first items to be discussed and adopted in the first plenary meeting. The plenary meetings and Committee A and Committee B meetings have a daily programme of work, with morning and afternoon meetings, and occasional evening meetings.

Drafting groups may be established by the two committees, with the aim of reaching agreement by the interested Parties on the draft decisions.

**5.6.1 Plenary:** The MOP opens with a plenary meeting chaired by the President of the MOP. The plenary meetings deal with issues related to proceedings, observer applications and global progress in implementation of the Protocol, among other issues. The general debate that follows the global progress report generally continues in the second plenary meeting. Usually, on the second or third day of the session, a plenary meeting is convened to validate the credentials of Party representatives. The plenary meeting also adopts reports of Committees A and B, which contain the draft decisions agreed by the committees.

**5.6.2 Committees A and B:** The work of Committees A and B is governed by Rule 24quinquies. While Committee A is generally entrusted with work on treaty instruments and technical matters, Committee B deals with work on reporting, implementation assistance, international cooperation, and institutional and budgetary matters.

Each committee shall elect a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons, with due regard to representation from each of the six WHO regions. Informal consultations to select the officers of the committees shall take place before the opening of the session. The plenary meeting decides on the officers before the committees begin their work.

Committee A and Committee B do not adopt decisions. The committees will present their reports containing the draft decisions for adoption by the MOP in a plenary meeting.

**5.6.3 Drafting groups:** Committees A and B may establish drafting groups as necessary. 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 provides support as needed.

**5.6.4 Decisions:** All MOP decisions are related to an agenda item and are titled and numbered. They start with a few background paragraphs, called preambular paragraphs, followed by paragraphs articulating specific actions, called operative paragraphs.

For some agenda items, the MOP notes the report without adopting a decision. For other agenda items, a decision is made following a discussion.

**Pre-session:** Reports to the MOP may contain a draft decision, which can be used as a basis for further discussions and negotiations for a final decision. Parties interested in submitting a draft decision prior to the session are encouraged to do so as early as possible, and in any event, not later than three days before the meeting (see reference to Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP below).

**In session:** In accordance with Rule 33 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP, draft decisions (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. The MOP may, however, permit their discussion and consideration even if these have not been circulated, or have only been circulated the same day.

The Convention Secretariat arranges translation and uploads online the draft decisions as Conference Papers in the session.

When a proposal has been adopted or rejected, it may not be reconsidered at the same session, unless the MOP so decides, in accordance with Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure of the MOP.

Delegations wishing to submit draft decisions to the Plenary meeting or to one of the committee meetings are invited to send their draft in advance via email to the Convention Secretariat.

Conference Papers containing draft decisions are distributed to MOP delegates through a secure and restricted online documentation portal and used as the basis for negotiation. In cases where a drafting group has been established, the final agreed text is reported back to the respective committee either by projecting it on the screen or issuing a Conference Paper or circulating a white paper in the room.

The draft decisions approved by the committees are included in a report of the committees to be adopted by the MOP during a plenary meeting.

## 5.7 Negotiation and consultation practices

Parties can consult on developing draft decisions in a number of ways. Here are the two most common practices:

**Negotiations before tabling:** Parties consult among themselves prior to the MOP and submit, if necessary, a draft decision. This practice saves time and facilitates quick adoption. This can be done during informal consultations and preparatory regional meetings prior to the opening of the session.

**Negotiations after tabling:** Parties decide to discuss and negotiate the draft decision contained in the pre-session documents in session with no prior consultation. In some cases, a few interested Parties gather on the margins of the meeting and report back with proposed text. In other cases, a drafting group is established. The chairpersons facilitate efforts to reach a consensus as much as possible, either in plenary or committee meetings before setting up drafting groups.





## 5.8 Informal consultations and preparatory regional meetings

**Informal consultations:** Prior to the opening of the MOP, Parties can request to hold informal consultations on draft decisions under any item of the provisional agenda to discuss and resolve concerns and comments, as well as reach a consensus.

**Preparatory regional meetings:** After the release of MOP documentation, a meeting in each of the six WHO regions is organized, where Parties, States non-Parties, and IGO and NGO observers are invited to attend. The meetings provide participants with information related to conference documents, as well as Parties with the opportunity to discuss regional positions and agreements.

## 5.9 Languages and interpretation

The MOP is a governing body meeting that follows the United Nations procedures regarding languages and interpretation. All official documentation is made available in the six official languages of the MOP: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Interpretation into the six official languages of the United Nations is provided for plenary, committees and informal regional meetings (see section 5.11).

## 5.10 Seating arrangements

Parties are seated in English-language alphabetical order for the first plenary

meeting, with the letter of the first row drawn by lot before the session.

Beginning on the second day, Parties usually prefer to be seated according to WHO region. Observers are seated in a specified area. Accredited members of the media are allocated a specific seating area, and the public is seated in the public gallery.

## 5.11 Informal regional meetings

The six WHO regions hold daily informal regional meetings during the MOP. Usually, those meetings take place in the morning before the plenary or committee meetings. The schedule for the regional meetings is reflected in the daily journals.

The regional meetings are usually chaired by regional coordinators, with the support from members of the Bureau of the respective region and with the assistance of the Convention Secretariat. Parties in the regions decide whether they wish to invite the observers to the MOP to attend these meetings.

## 5.12 Bilateral or private meetings

Any bilateral or private meetings can be arranged by the delegations via the Convention Secretariat. Upon the availability of the rooms and, on a first-come, first-served basis, the Convention Secretariat makes arrangements to accommodate these requests. Regrettably, interpretation cannot be provided for such meetings.

## 6. Events around the Conference of the Parties

### 6.1 Side events

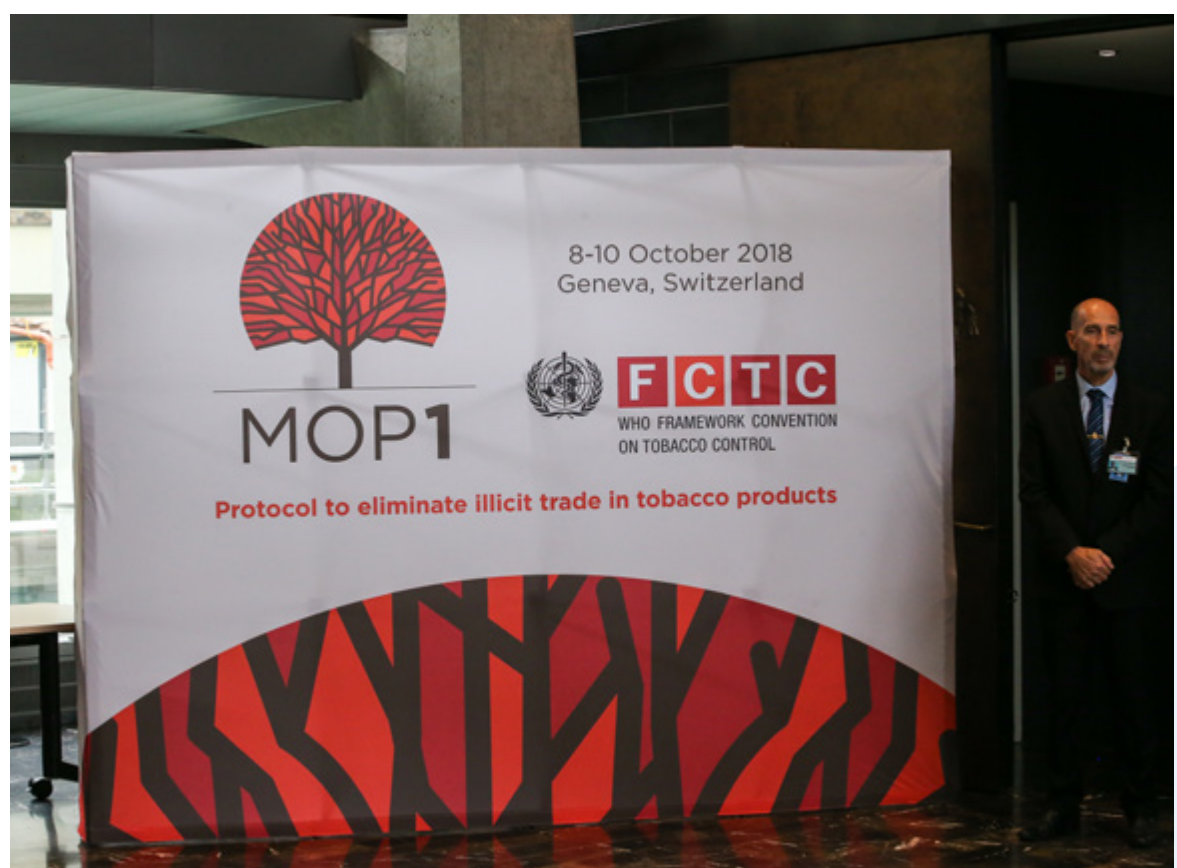
The Convention Secretariat in collaboration with the Bureau selects proposals for side events. Parties and observers interested in hosting a side event during the MOP submit their request to the Convention Secretariat by an established deadline. The organization of any side event is the responsibility of the organizers and payment of any related costs (such as interpretation, specific equipment, broadcasting, video

recording, etc.) must be settled before the events are finalized.

### 6.2 Marketplace

The aim of the Marketplace is to provide new forms of engagement and networking opportunities and reinforce international cooperation. The Marketplace is open on the first day and runs from the morning until 18:00 every day of the MOP at the conference venue, except for the final day. Stands and booths are set up the day before the opening of the MOP.

Additional details about the marketplace and exhibitions are available on the WHO FCTC website.



## 7. Abbreviations and terms frequently used during the sessions of the Meeting of the Parties

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<b>AC</b>	Assessed Contributions
<b>Convention Secretariat</b>	Secretariat of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
<b>COP</b>	Conference of the Parties
<b>EB</b>	Extra-budgetary Contributions
<b>ENDS</b>	Electronic nicotine delivery systems
<b>ENNDS</b>	Electronic non-nicotine delivery systems
<b>HTP</b>	Heated tobacco products
<b>LDC</b>	Least-developed country
<b>LIC</b>	Low-income country
<b>LMIC</b>	Lower- middle-income country
<b>MOP</b>	Meeting of the Parties
<b>NCDs</b>	Noncommunicable diseases
<b>Protocol</b>	Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products
<b>ROP</b>	Rules of Procedure of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SLT</b>	Smokeless tobacco
<b>TAPS</b>	Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship
<b>TI</b>	Tobacco industry
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNIATF</b>	United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WHO FCTC</b>	WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control





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