

How Mongolia ratified the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) was signed and ratified by Mongolia on 16 June 2003 and 27 January 2004 respectively.

The Mongolia's Tobacco Control Law 2005 was revised in 2012 and approved by the Parliament on 1st March 2013, prohibiting smoking in public places along with measures to regulate the sale, packaging, labelling, and advertising, promotion and sponsorship for Tobacco products. The Tobacco Control Law was further revised in 2017 to make it compliant with the WHO FCTC.

Mongolia participated actively in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) which drafted the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products from 2008-2012.

After the INBs, the Ministry of Health developed a plan of action for ratification of the Protocol and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs carried out an official translation and verification of the Protocol into the Mongolian language on 5 March 2013.

In mid-June 2013, a multisectoral technical working group was established to prepare the Protocol ratification.

In September 2013, a proposal to ratify the protocol, supported by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was circulated to 15 ministries that approved it on 26 December 2013.

On 12 February 2014, the Ministry of Health submitted a draft law for the protocol ratification to the government cabinet; Subsequently, the cabinet approved the Protocol ratification and gave permission to submit the draft law to the Parliament on 21 February 2014. Afterwards, the Ministry of Justice put forward an official request for approval at the Parliament's session on March 19, 2014.

Despite various challenges, including the tobacco industry interference to delay ratification process, the draft law was sent to the standing committee on social policy, education, culture and science and the Parliament ratified the Protocol on 24 April 2014.

The law for ratification was signed and announced in the Law Gazette in early June 2014.

On 6 June 2014, the Permanent Mission of Mongolia to the United Nations in New York deposited the instrument of ratification.

On 8 October 2014, Mongolia became the first WHO FCTC Party in the Western Pacific Region to ratify the Protocol.

The main conditions that led to the ratification of the Protocol by Mongolia were:

1. Strong leadership and Political commitment of the Mongolian Government and Parliament
2. Whole of government approach: effective multisectoral technical working group
3. Supportive women group at the Parliament and media engagement,
4. distribution of the Protocol and other advocacy materials available in Mongolian language
5. Advocacy campaign through media coverage.