

BUCHAREST DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND A TOBACCO-FREE EUROPE

Adopted on March 29, 2019 in Bucharest, Romania

We, the participants in the 4th ENSP-SRP International Conference on Tobacco Control 2019, meeting in Bucharest, Romania, on 27-29 March 2019, having heard from leading world authorities on human rights and tobacco control and explored efforts undertaken by a wide range of international organizations, civil society, and scholars to translate this vision into practice, recognize the value of combining efforts of the human rights and tobacco control communities to put an end to the tobacco epidemic.

We reaffirm the support of the European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention (ENSP) at its 3rd International Conference for the Cape Town Declaration on Human Rights and a Tobacco-Free World. Accordingly, we applaud the determination, expressed in the preamble to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), of States Parties “to give priority to the right to protect public health,” and to respect the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as expressed in Article 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

We agree that the manufacture, marketing and sale of tobacco are incompatible with human rights, in particular, the right to health, the rights of children and women, the right to development, and the right to a healthy environment. We support the position taken by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in its General Comment No. 14, that the “failure to discourage production, marketing and consumption of tobacco” constitutes a violation of the obligation to protect under Article 12 (the right to health) of the ICESCR. We further affirm that commerce in tobacco products and second-hand smoke, among other priorities in tobacco control, have negative impacts on human rights

As citizens of Europe, we are deeply committed to the human rights undertakings of the founding documents and other human rights commitments of the European Union and the Council of Europe, which we value as standards relevant to our struggle for a tobacco-free world.

Therefore, we appeal to Governments to fully comply with their obligations under the WHO FCTC and human rights treaties they have ratified to prioritize human rights over the interests of the tobacco industry and to accelerate action, build partnerships and protect integrity, consistent with the WHO FCTC “Global Strategy to Accelerate Tobacco Control: Advancing Sustainable Development through the Implementation of the WHO FCTC 2019–2025.” We encourage tobacco control activists to work with human rights advocates in using the full range of human rights mechanisms to hold governments accountable for effective tobacco control action as part of realizing the right to health.

We welcome the contributions of intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders to the promotion of effective action for tobacco control as a contribution to the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs and the 2030 Development Agenda and commit to working with them to make human rights a cross-cutting dimension of these global strategies.