

COP11 News

GENEVA 17 - 22 November 2025



International Tobacco Growers' Association
Echoing Tobacco Growers' Voices since 1984

Inside COP11



The Doors at WHO FCTC COP11 Remain Closed for Growers on November 18

The Canadian Cancer Society released the 9th Edition of the **Cigarette Packaging Health Warnings: International Status Report**

[Read Report](#)

Forward looking measures including plain packaging, a tobacco manufacturer cost recovery fee, so-called generational bans and other progressive restrictions on sales are at the centre of today's discussions.

Multiple delegations, observers, non-treaty members, and NGOs **delivered statements**, and among them there were voices calling for greater transparency and inclusion.

Outside COP11

Brazilian Tobacco Sector Delegation and ITGA President visiting the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations

The delegation representing the tobacco production chain met with the Brazilian Ambassador in Switzerland, Tovar da Silva Nunes, on the sidelines of COP11 in Geneva to press concerns about proposed restrictions. They warned that a possible ban on cigarette filters could boost the illicit market and hurt small producers and secured a daily dialogue slot at Brazil's Permanent Mission to the UN ([Read Article](#)). In addition, Deputy Airton Artus described a follow-up meeting with Ambassador Nunes as "very promising," noting that their large group (despite being denied formal COP11 access) impressed the diplomat and highlighted the socioeconomic importance of the tobacco industry ([Read Article](#)).



ITGA President Jose Aranda, Afubra Vice-President Romeu Schneider and Afubra Secretary Marco Dornelles at the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations

Daily Highlights

•EU countries arrived at the WHO's COP11 in Geneva without a unified stance, forcing the bloc to abstain from key votes. The divide pits governments favouring stricter rules — such as flavour bans, plain packaging, and cost-recovery fees — against those warning of economic impacts and emphasising harm reduction. The rift is seen as an early preview of the difficult negotiations expected when the EU unveils its own tobacco-control reforms later this year.

[Read Article 1](#)

[Read Article 2](#)

•Dominican Republic and Cuba speak with honour about tobacco growing in their respective markets

[Read Coverage](#)



ITGA Mobilization at COP4

WHO FCTC 20th Anniversary

COP4: Proposed Ingredients Ban and Global Farmer Mobilization

Background

At the Fourth Conference of the Parties (COP4) to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), governments debated the implementation of **Articles 9 and 10**, which address tobacco product regulation and mandated disclosure of product ingredients. During these discussions, a proposal emerged to **ban specific ingredients commonly used in traditional burley-blend cigarettes**.

Impact on Burley-Growing Countries

Burley tobacco is essential in traditional cigarette manufacturing: without it, the products become effectively **unsmokable** due to loss of combustibility and flavour balance. More critically, the proposal posed serious socio-economic risks for countries whose economies rely heavily on burley production.

Malawi, for example, derives **around 60% of its foreign exchange earnings** from burley tobacco.

The absence of **agricultural expertise**, and notably any representation of **tobacco-growing communities**, in technical deliberations contributed to the controversial nature of the proposal.

The issue resurfaced on the agenda a decade later at **COP10**, demonstrating its long-term significance.

ITGA's Global Mobilization

In response to the threat posed to millions of farming families, the **International Tobacco Growers' Association (ITGA)** launched its **first global advocacy campaign**. This coordinated effort represented an unprecedented moment for farmer participation in FCTC-related decision-making.

Key outcomes included:

- **238,000 signatures** gathered worldwide opposing the proposed ban.
- A **mobilization of 350 growers** who gathered outside the COP4 venue to voice their concerns directly to delegates.
- Support from major regional organizations, including **COMESA (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa)**, which joined other alliances in rejecting measures that could destabilize agricultural economies.

Significance

The campaign remains the **largest mobilization in the history of the tobacco-growing sector**, illustrating the power of coordinated action between farmers, regional bodies, and international partners. It also underscored the need for **inclusive policymaking** that takes into account agricultural, economic, and social realities—not only health objectives.