

DECLARATION

of the Ministers in charge of Healthcare of the BSEC Member States
on Enhanced Tobacco control measures for better social
and economic development.

(Chisinau, 5th June, 2015)

We, the Ministers, in charge of Healthcare of the BSEC Member States,

Acknowledging the importance of enhancing cooperation in the area of public health and pharmaceuticals in the BSEC region;

Directed by the “BSEC Economic Agenda towards an Enhanced BSEC Partnership”, in particular by Its Goal 7 “Health Care and Pharmaceuticals”, adopted by the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Belgrade on 11 June 2012 and endorsed by the Heads of State and Government of the BSEC Member States in Istanbul, on 26 June 2012;

Taking into consideration the Decision of the Thirtieth Meeting of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the BSEC Member States in Varna, on 19 June 2014, related to regular exchange of information among the BSEC Member States;

Recalling the WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013–2020 and the Ashgabat Declaration in the Context of Health 2020;

Noting the global voluntary targets of a 25% relative reduction in risk of premature mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory diseases and a 30% relative reduction in prevalence of current tobacco use in persons aged 15+ years;

Asserting the need to strengthen the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products as cost-effective evidence based instruments for public health and social and economic development;

Emphasizing that the assistance of the World Health Organization in supporting the implementation of the WHO FCTC and its Protocol is crucial for strengthening tobacco control cooperation among countries of the BSEC region;

Recognizing the irreconcilable conflict between public health and the commercial vested interests of the tobacco industry, as per the Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC and its Guidelines;

Confirming that price and tax policies on tobacco products are the single most effective measure to reduce the demand for tobacco products;

Taking into account the World Health Organization's recommendation that tobacco excise taxes account for at least 70 percent of the retail prices for tobacco products;

Validating that the stepping up of cooperation in the field of fiscal policies of tobacco products in the BSEC is essential to reduce the demand for tobacco products;

Affirming that only 100% smoke free public places and their effective enforcement have immediate positive health effects, including substantial reduction in the incidence of heart attacks and improvements in respiratory health;

We declare our resolution to:

1. *Support* the resolution to continue joint efforts to achieve close cooperation between the BSEC Member States supported by the World Health Organization in adopting and implementing effective policy measures on tobacco control in line with WHO FCTC, its Guidelines and its Protocol.
2. *Welcome* cooperation in the field of elimination of all forms of illicit trade of tobacco products, including smuggling, illicit manufacturing and counterfeiting, as per the Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products and to ensure the exchange of information in protecting health from tobacco, between the participating BSEC Member States and with support from the World Health Organization.
3. *Welcome and support* the Roadmap of actions to strengthen the implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in the WHO European Region 2015–2025 to be discussed and adopted at the Regional Committee for Europe in next September;
4. *Share* information and exchange experience in the field of fiscal policies in tobacco products, to achieve public health objectives.
5. *Encourage* the BSEC Member States to protect their health policies from tobacco industry interference.

6. *Support and encourage* countries of the BSEC region which have not yet adopted or implemented effective policy measures to ensure protection from exposure to tobacco smoke to adopt and implement legislation ensuring 100% smoke free public places, consistent with WHO FCTC article 8 and its Guidelines.
7. *Encourage* the relevant National Administrations for tobacco control of the BSEC Member States to coordinate their actions, in order to allow the regular and systematic exchange of information in tobacco control.

We express our gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Moldova for the organization of the Meeting and for the hospitality extended.