



TOBACCO = CANCER WHY TAKE THE RISK?

CALL FOR ACTION



TOBACCO USE KILLS MORE THAN 5 MILLION PEOPLE EVERY YEAR CANCER KILLS NEARLY 8 MILLION PEOPLE EVERY YEAR

TOBACCO USE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR 1.8 MILLION CANCER-RELATED DEATHS EVERY YEAR

Tobacco use is capable of damaging nearly every organ of the human body, causes at least 15 different cancers, and is solely responsible for 30% of all cancer related deaths.

More than 40 chemicals in tobacco smoke have been shown to cause cancer. Smokers are 20 times more likely to develop lung cancer than nonsmokers.

Tobacco and cancer pose an unquestionable public health threat to both smokers and nonsmokers, particularly in developing countries. By 2030 or sooner, projections have shown that developing countries will bear the brunt of the cancer and tobacco disease burdens leading to:

12 million cancer-related deaths every year

AND

10 million tobacco-related deaths every year

Dr Hussein A. Gezairy, WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, and Ambassador Nancy Brinker, WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Cancer Control, call upon all Member States of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region to:

Adopt this Call for Action and form a united front against two of the most deadly causes of disease and death worldwide.

Tobacco has proven to be at least as addictive as heroin and cocaine which, contradicts the popular misconception that tobacco use is a choice. Uniting against this deadly epidemic and its ill health effects, in particular cancer is definitely a choice that we can make today.

Ratify the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control at once if they are not yet Parties to this Convention.

Carry out all measures needed to strongly implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, if they are currently Parties to this Convention, as it embraces all elements of a comprehensive tobacco control agenda. Special emphasis should be given to areas that have a direct and immediate impact on decreasing the prevalence of tobacco use, such as:

- a complete ban on all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship;
- the enforcement of tobacco-free public places with no designated areas for smokers;
- the adoption of pictorial health warnings on packs; and
- increasing taxes on tobacco products and fighting smuggling activities.

Come Together in the fight against tobacco and cancer through:

- coordination at regional and national levels;
- partnerships between various entities at country level, including government agencies, academic institutions, professional associations and civil society organizations; and
- coordination with and support of international cooperation and development agencies.

Let us all join forces here today to prevent the unnecessary deaths resulting from tobacco use and cancer, as well as to protect the rights of smokers, nonsmokers and future generations.

Let us choose health and well-being rather than disease and debilitation.

Together, we can and will make a difference as this battle cannot be won alone.

Dr Hussein A. Gezairy
WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean

Ambassador Nancy Brinker
WHO Goodwill Ambassador for Cancer Control