

## Statements of Consumer Activists

*“Meaningful public participation in decision-making is a human right that must be defended and enhanced in the face of pushback...” - UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres - Sep 2020. However, if you are a supporter of tobacco harm reduction, you can expect indifference, labelling and exclusion.” - Kurt Yeo, [VSML](#)*

*“COP11 must stop ignoring the lived reality of millions of adult smokers who have already switched to safer alternatives. The WHO’s refusal to engage with harm reduction evidence is costing lives and credibility. We call for transparency, inclusion of consumer voices, and science-based policy — not ideology. Tobacco harm reduction is not a threat to public health; it’s a lifeline.” - Danny Wang, [VAPE Taiwan](#)*

*“At the meeting convened by Colombia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ASOVAPE presented to Colombia’s COP11 delegation a clear request: for the country to promote a coherent, evidence-based roadmap that strengthens its leadership in public health and human rights. We urged Colombia to defend harm reduction (HR) as an integral part of the Framework Convention under Article 1(d), and to support the creation of a technical intersessional process that distinguishes public health strategies from commercial or ideological narratives.*

*This proposal seeks to ensure that global decisions are made on the basis of independent scientific evidence, free from conflicts of interest, and consistent with Colombia’s own progress—including Law 2354 of 2024, the Ministry of Health’s resolutions, and the 2022–2026 National Development Plan.*

*The fact that Colombia has chosen to include harm reduction as part of its public health policies shows institutional maturity and a true commitment to evidence; now it must uphold that coherence internationally at COP11 and lead the way toward COP12 with measurable outcomes, cooperation, and regional leadership in harm reduction.” - Francisco Ordonez, [Asovape Colombia](#)*

*“It is deeply troubling to watch Canadian, taxpayer-funded NGOs use their platform at COP11 to spread fear, misinformation, and stigma around safer nicotine products. Canada has stood for decades as a global leader in harm reduction, compassion, and science-based policy — yet that legacy is now being threatened by a small but vocal group of fear-driven crusaders more interested in ideology than evidence.*

*I urge the Canadian delegates here with Health Canada to remember who we are as a nation. We do not shame people who struggle with addiction. We do not silence lived experience. And we do not abandon tools that save lives simply because they challenge outdated beliefs.*

*Right now, transparency matters. Evidence matters. Engagement with all stakeholders matters, not just those who fit the World Health Organizations predetermined narrative. Canada has shown the world what principled, humane, science-led leadership looks like. I expect and Canadians expect our publicly funded delegation to uphold that standard with integrity, honesty, and a commitment to truth over fear-based rhetoric.*

*Lives are at stake. Our reputation as a global harm-reduction leader is at stake. We must choose courage, science, and compassion.*" - **Maria Papaioannoy**, [Rights4Vapers](#)

*"I believe COP11 will be a defining moment for our region, especially as African countries continue battling smoking-related diseases while struggling with weak health systems and limited cessation support. Decisions made in Switzerland could either open the door to science-driven harm reduction, or shut it completely, leaving millions without safer alternatives."* - **Joseph Magero**, Chair; [Campaign for Safer Alternatives](#).

*"I strongly believe Nigeria stands at a crossroads ahead of FCTC COP11. With millions of smokers and limited cessation support, banning safer nicotine alternatives will not eliminate demand; it will simply push products into an expanding black market. Nigeria needs culturally relevant, safer alternatives that fit the realities of local communities, including smokeless and low-risk products already familiar within parts of the country."* - **Olatunji Uche**: Director, [THR Nigeria](#)

*"The WHO's COP11 is more than a global conference — it's a turning point for countries like Greece, where thousands of former smokers have already switched to vaping. If decisions made behind closed doors ignore science and consumer voices, we risk reversing real public health progress. Greece has a chance to stand for evidence-based harm reduction, not prohibition. The impact of COP11 will be felt in every vape shop, every smoker trying to quit, and every policymaker choosing between ideology and innovation."* - **Nick Christofidis**, [Greek Vapers' Alliance](#)

*"Nicotine consumers are legitimate stakeholders, yet remain the most disadvantaged group in tobacco control. We are at the endpoint of every decision, but we are excluded from every discussion. Current policies have produced consequences we can no longer ignore — illicit markets are growing unchecked, and millions of smokers who want to quit are being denied access to safer alternatives. The problem is not lack of effort — it's a one-size-fits-all approach that puts ideology above science. Ideology is not reality. We're here to bring science back to the center, to give consumers a voice, and to build policies that prolong lives. As we face the future of tobacco control, let us remember: nothing about us, without us."* - **Anton Israel**, [Nicotine Consumers Union of the Philippines \[NCUP\]](#)

*"As WHO COP11 approaches, Malaysia stands at a pivotal moment in its tobacco harm reduction journey. The enforcement of Act 852 marks a new era for the local vape industry, one that must prioritise responsible use and strong consumer protection. At the Malaysian Vapers Alliance, we believe that effective implementation should go hand in hand with education by helping adult smokers understand how vaping can serve as a less harmful alternative to cigarettes. Harm reduction must remain at the heart of our national strategy so that we can truly harness the potential of vaping to reduce smoking prevalence and improve public*

health outcomes in Malaysia “ - Khairil Azizi Khairuddin, [Malaysian Vapers Alliance \(MVA\)](#)

“ From our point of view, it is most important that there are no dramatic restrictions on less risky alternatives. A potential ban on MO would be absolutely disastrous and would set a bad precedent for the revision of the TPD, which will take place in the coming years.” - Petr Horáček, [Generace bez Kouře](#)

"The WHO COP11 shows how far global health policy drifts when ideology replaces evidence. In Croatia, safer alternatives are taxed and restricted like cigarettes, while a negative media campaign — even supported by our public health institute — literally discourages people from quitting smoking. We need a hard reset in tobacco policy that follows science and truly reduces harm." - Filip Tokić, [Croatian Vaping Assosiation “CROHM”](#)

“The outcomes of COP11 will have a direct impact on millions of consumers worldwide. If decisions are guided by science and the best interests of consumers, harm reduction must be recognised as a crucial tool for public health. However, if the process is driven by ideology rather than scientific evidence, both consumers and public health will face serious setbacks. Ignoring science in policymaking always leads to counterproductive effects, and this is no exception.” - Liza Katsiashvili, [World Vapers' Alliance](#)

“As COP11 approaches, we face a fundamental test of legitimacy in global health governance. You cannot claim to serve public health while excluding the public. The continued silencing of consumers, lack of transparency, and disregard for harm reduction evidence undermine both credibility and impact. If decisions are made behind closed doors, shaped by private agendas rather than science, they will not be respected, nor will they save lives. It's time for COP to return to its founding principles: openness, inclusion, and evidence-based policy.”

— Alberto Gómez Hernández, [World Vapers' Alliance](#)

“COP11 has become an echo chamber stuck in outdated, anti-science thinking that fails consumers. Harm reduction is not a marketing ploy but a public health necessity backed by evidence. Less harmful nicotine alternatives are not the enemy but part of the solution, and consumers deserve a real voice in decisions that affect their lives.” - Michael Landl, [World Vapers' Alliance](#)