

Dear Secretariat,

The undersigned organisations would like to express their gratitude to the Government of Switzerland for hosting this INC 5.2 in Geneva, as well as to the INC Secretariat for their ongoing support and of course to the Chair for the preparation of the Chair's Text. We welcome the opportunity to provide a written statement intervention.

ASH, with the support of Surfrider Foundation Europe, Break Free From Plastic, Fair Resource Foundation, Global Center for Good Governance in Tobacco Control, Swiss Association for Tobacco Control and Gezondheidsfondsen voor Rookvrij ask Member States to support and advocate for a **ban on all cigarette filters, not just “filters made with plastic.”** Cigarette filters toxically pollute our living environment and mislead people who smoke by making them think that smoking is less harmful with a filter. Cigarette filters serve no purpose, other than being a marketing tool for the tobacco industry to sell more cigarettes.

Why ban cigarette filters?

1. It is estimated that more than **100.000 (!) cigarette filters end up in the environment every second** (by the time you have read this letter millions of cigarette filters have entered the environment)
 - Cellulose acetate cigarette filters break down into **microplastics and nanoplastics**
 - Littering is basically **baked into the design** of cigarette filters
 - Even if 90% (!) of cigarette filters would be discarded properly, still **billions (!) of butts** would end up in the environment worldwide annually: **awareness raising is not enough of a solution**
 - **Cleaning up is simply impossible** (on 'No Butts Day' 2025, the annual global cigarette butt action day, thousands of people from 25 countries collected one million butts in one day: that is just 10 seconds of littered cigarette butts.
2. **Cigarettes contain over 7000 toxic chemicals**, like heavy metals, **arsenic**, pesticides, tar and nicotine, and some of these are **readily leached into aquatic habitats** ([UNEP on Issues of concern](#))
 - Even **unsmoked cellulose acetate filters can be toxic** to some invertebrates and plants
 - Leachate from a single cigarette butt can **contaminate 1000 liter water** with concentrations of nicotine above the EU predicted no effect concentration of only $2.4 \times 10^{-3} \text{ mg L}^{-1}$, thus qualifying as **hazardous waste** according to EU thresholds
 - Since 2006, over 35 studies have examined the **toxicity of cigarette butts** in biota from aquatic and terrestrial habitats and **a range of lethal and sublethal impacts** have been documented
 - Cigarette filter pollution is **estimated** to **cost US\$26 billion/year** in waste management and marine ecosystem damage worldwide
 - Despite gaps in knowledge, there is evidence that **cigarette butts can be lethal** for a range of aquatic organisms, including **microorganisms**, **invertebrates**, and **fish**.
 - On land, littered cigarette butts can contaminate crops with nicotine, and **reduce growth and alter productivity** of common plants.
3. Cigarette filters **don't reduce harm from smoking**: **research** has confirmed that filters never made smoking safer, but instead **imposed additional health hazards**
4. Almost all current cigarette filters contain plasticized cellulose acetate fibers, which **do not or very slowly breakdown** in the natural environment
5. Any **alternative filter would cause similar environmental pollution and mislead** people who smoke

Cigarette filters are not only a **problematic and avoidable** plastic, as mentioned in the draft of the Global Plastics Treaty, they are simply an **unnecessary product** causing unnecessary harm to people, animals and the environment. A ban on cigarette filters is in everybody's interest, except for the tobacco industry and its partners. There are no reasons not to ban filters.

The signatories call upon Member States to support a ban on all cigarette filters, not just (bio-based) plastic cigarette filters.

Many thanks for your time and support.
We wish you all the best for INC 5.2.

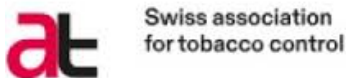
Sincere regards,
ASH



With the support of:



#BreakFreeFromPlastic



**FAIR
RESOURCE
FOUNDATION**



**Global Center for
Good Governance
in Tobacco Control**



**GEZONDHEIDSFONDSEN
VOOR ROOKVRIJ**