

Cambodia



Summary of Findings

1. INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The government does not accept offers of assistance from the tobacco industry (TI), nor endorses any policies drafted by the industry, nor invites the industry to sit at meetings deciding on tobacco control policy. There were meetings between a few non-health departments with the TI, namely the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Consumer Protection Competition and Fraud Repression Directorate General (CCF) of the Ministry of Commerce.

The TI is not represented in Cambodia's delegation to the COP and related meetings.

2. INDUSTRY CSR ACTIVITIES

TI-related CSR activities are not banned and remain a problem in Cambodia. They are largely conducted by transnational tobacco companies, BAT and JTI.

The TI took advantage of the conditions during Covid-19 to launch numerous CSR activities. These included monetary donations to charitable organizations, PPE distribution to governmental institutes and local authorities, and handing out food parcels to people affected by the pandemic.

3. BENEFITS TO THE INDUSTRY

Benefits are still given to the TI, although not all of these are publicly known. For example, the Ministry of Commerce's announcement on the waiver of duties to tobacco leaves exported to Vietnam, and exemption of import tax by the Vietnam government for registered farmers, producing more than 3,000 tons of leaves. Publicity was given to the duty exemption urging tobacco growers to take advantage

of the exemption. The Ministry of Commerce is actively involved in providing incentives for tobacco leaf export to Vietnam.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance also granted the TI's request to delay the implementation of newly rotated PHWs by 4 months.

4. UNNECESSARY INTERACTION

Unnecessary interactions with the TI was documented. High ranking officials from the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Commerce, together with the Japanese Ambassador to Cambodia attended the Inauguration Ceremony of JTI Cambodia's new headquarters. The TI also signed an MoU with the government's Anti-Corruption Unit to fight corruption.

5. TRANSPARENCY

There are no rules or procedures for disclosure or registration of TI entities, affiliated organizations, and individuals acting on their behalf. This is the area that the TI can use to misrepresent its meetings with the various government departments.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The president of the LYP Group, which owns the cigarette business of Hero King Co., LTD, and the president of Anco Brother Co., Ltd, which distributes tobacco products from Singapura United Tobacco to British American Tobacco (BAT), are still senators in the 4th mandate (2018-2022). The government does not prohibit contributions from the TI or any entity working to further its interests to political



parties, candidates, or campaigns or to require full disclosure of such contributions.

7. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

A Sub-Decree on the Establishment and Functioning of the Committee for Tobacco Control was passed in 2017 which has incorporated principles of Article 5.3 There is no periodic submission of information from the TI about its business and

what it spends on marketing and philanthropy. While the MOH has disseminated Article 5.3 to all members of the National Tobacco Control Committee, there is no information whether there is a program to constantly raise awareness on policies related to Article 5.3.

The Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport is the only government institute which banned any form of partnership between educational facilities with the TI.

Recommendations

1. All forms of CSR activities must be banned for entities involved in the TI.
2. A code of conduct for government officials must be adopted to provide a procedure for interactions with the TI.
3. Cambodia must ratify the Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products and receive technical assistance from Parties rather than collaborate with the TI on voluntary activities.