

Honduras



Summary of Findings

I. INDUSTRY PARTICIPATION IN POLICY DEVELOPMENT

There is no evidence that the government accepted or received offers of assistance from the tobacco industry (TI) in the development or implementation of public health policies related to tobacco control. Nor was there record of the government allowing the TI to sit on interagency tables, multisectoral committees, or public health policy advisory bodies. However, the Honduran tobacco company is affiliated with the National Association of Industrialists of Honduras (ANDI), who in turn are members of the Honduran Council of Private Enterprise (COHEP), which has been one of the institutions that is part of the multisectoral tables and was very close to the management of the health crisis by COVID-19 in the country.

The last COP was held virtually in November 2021. In the delegation of the government of Honduras there is no record of the participation of the TI or sponsorship of the delegation. Only 3 officials in the Honduran delegation were directly related to health (SESAL), 2 were from the Honduran Institute of Alcoholism, Drug Addiction and Drug Dependence (IHADFA) and the rest comprised of representatives of foreign affairs, ambassadors, ministers of economic development and economic integration and cooperation. When addressing the issue the head of the delegation, the Deputy Minister of Economic Integration and Cooperation, stated a preference for trade over health in his intervention - going so far as to say "Tobacco control during a global health emergency."

2. INDUSTRY CSR ACTIVITIES

Representatives of government institutions of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Municipal Mayor's Office of the municipality of Danlí, El Paraíso

participated in corporate social responsibility activities of the TI Grupo Plascencia Tabacos donated 15 blocks of land to the Municipal Mayor's Office of Danlí. Similarly, in alliance with Tabacalera de Oriente Plascencia Tabaco donated organic fertilizer to Mi Ambiente in the municipality, and tobacco factory Oscar Valladares donated trash collectors for the Marcelo Tinoco Stadium.

3. BENEFITS TO THE INDUSTRY

Decree No. 15-2016 (Gaceta, 2016) declared cigars as intangible cultural heritage of the Republic (Article 2). Privileges and incentives are granted to the TI as recognition for its contributions to the country's image on the global stage culturally.

High-level government officials from the Ministry of Economic Development, the Vice Ministers of Tourism, Foreign Affairs and representatives of the National Congress have participated in joint visits with diplomatic delegations to tobacco factories to facilitate support from international donors to promote agrotourism.

4. UNNECESSARY INTERACTION

High-level government officials such as the President of the National Congress have participated as a special guest and met with representatives of the TI at the Third Cigar and Coffee Festival in Danlí, El Paraíso. Congressmen from the Freedom and Refoundation Party (LIBRE) and the Private Secretary of the Presidency also participated in the event.

The Minister of Tourism gave an award to Flor de Copán Honduras, "a recognized Copaneca company that managed to position Honduras as a first-class tobacco producing country worldwide, and actively promoted the tourism industry in international fairs."



5. TRANSPARENCY

The Government establishes rules for the accreditation or registration of entities in the TI; in accordance with the Law on Strengthening Revenues, Social Equity and Rationalization of Public Expenditure, Decree 17-2010, Article 30 creates the National Registry of Cigarette Producers and Importers. As of January 9, 2020, it also incorporates the Certificate of Registration of Cigarette Producers and Importers, which specifies the requirements certified through the compliance assistance window, with an update on January 3, 2022.

6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

General prohibitions on contributions to political parties remain, but nothing specific to the TI.

No evidence was found of retired, active senior public officials or their family members occupying positions in the TI.

7. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

We found no evidence of a procedure for publicly disseminating the record of interactions between the government and the TI.

There is no exclusive code of ethics to standardize the interaction of public officials with the TI. There is still no systematic program, system or implementation plan in the country to raise awareness of Article 5.3 Guidelines.

Recommendations

1. The National Congress should make legislative reforms to the Special Law for Tobacco Control to guarantee the full validity of the WHO FCTC.
2. It is recommended to repeal the Decree No.15-2016, where the cigar is declared as intangible cultural heritage of the Republic, in order to prioritize the health of the Honduran people.
3. The Ministry of Health and IHADFA should promote a training plan for officials on the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and Article 5.3
4. Government institutions and municipal mayors must refuse corporate social responsibility (CSR) funding from the TI.
5. Government officials should avoid interactions such as participating in, promoting, or otherwise engaging in TI's social events.
6. The Law on Financing, Transparency and Oversight of Political Parties and Candidates should prohibit contributions from the TI.