



For immediate release

TJNA and CTPD laud Zambian Parliament for landmark adoption of Tobacco Control Bill, 2025

The Tax Justice Network Africa (TJNA) and the Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD) jointly commend the Zambian Parliament for the adoption of the Tobacco Control Bill No. 40 of 2025, paving the way for its possible assent by the Republican President, Dr. Hakainde Hichilema.

This follows a unanimous vote for its passage through the third reading, which was held on 4 May 2026. This move marks a historic milestone not only for public health but also a significant push towards enhancing fiscal stability and domestic revenue mobilisation efforts in Africa.

The TC Bill demonstrates Zambia's strong commitment to protecting present and future generations from the health, social, environmental, and economic harms associated with tobacco and nicotine products.

By domesticating the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, Zambia has taken a decisive step toward aligning national legislation with global best practice in tobacco control, public health protection, and regulation of emerging nicotine products.

Perhaps the most significant provision of the bill is the banning of all advertising and promotion of tobacco and nicotine products, including prohibiting sales to minors to prevent early addiction. The bill further restricts government officials' engagement with the tobacco industry in line with Article 5.3 of the WHO FCTC. It also provides for the establishment of smoke-free public places to protect people from second-hand smoke and outlines cessation services to support those wishing to quit. Notably, it also provides for the creation of a dedicated Tobacco Control Fund, an essential mechanism to ensure sustainable financing for enforcement and long-term tobacco control efforts.

Further, the Bill's provisions on smoke-free environments, advertising bans, graphic health warnings, industry interference, and protection of minors represent a comprehensive and forward-looking framework for safeguarding public health.

This development comes at a critical time when Zambia is facing a dual burden of rising non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and declining external development assistance towards the health sector. These impacts are driving rising cases of non-communicable diseases and preventable deaths. They are also placing growing pressure on an already overstretched health system. At the same time, evidence from tobacco tax research shows that weak tobacco control measures and existing industry incentives are worsening these health and economic burdens. The

Zambia investments case study and WHO prevalence reports note Tobacco use resulting in over 7,000 deaths annually and costing Zambia an estimated ZMW 2.8 billion every year.

A recent analysis of the 2024 tax expenditure report by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning portrays tobacco excise tax incentives for local cigarette manufacturers, costing Zambia approximately 1.6 billion Kwacha in lost potential public revenue between 2016 and 2022 due to preferential tax treatment. These resources could otherwise have strengthened healthcare financing, public services, and national development priorities. The adoption of this Bill therefore signals an important shift toward stronger regulation, accountability, and protection of public interests over tobacco industry influence.

TJNA and CTPD, therefore, welcome this progressive action by the Zambian Parliament and commend the Government of Zambia, civil society organisations, researchers, and public health advocates who contributed to advancing this legislation.

The Bill represents more than a legal reform; it is a major investment in public health, domestic revenue mobilisation, and long-term economic productivity. Once assented to by the President, it will enable full implementation of these reforms.

Zambia's action sends a strong continental message. Effective tobacco control and stronger tobacco taxation are essential tools for saving lives, reducing the burden of non-communicable diseases, and building resilient and well-financed health systems. This approach aligns with the aspirations of the WHO FCTC, Africa's Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

About Tax Justice Network Africa

Tax Justice Network Africa (TJNA) is a pan-African organisation and a member of the Global Alliance for Tax Justice. TJNA promotes socially just, accountable, and progressive taxation systems in Africa. It advocates tax policies with pro-poor outcomes and tax systems that curb public resource leakages and enhance domestic resource mobilisation.

About the Centre for Trade Policy and Development

The Centre for Trade Policy and Development (CTPD) is a not-for-profit, membership-based think-tank, working on economic policy issues. CTPD advocates pro-poor trade and investment policies that promote sustainable development and inclusive growth. As a network member of the Tax Justice Network Africa, CTPD focuses on areas such as tax justice, extractives governance, trade and investment policy, climate change, and social sector financing.

Issued by TJNA Executive Director Ms. Chennai Mukumba and CTPD Executive Director Mr. Isaac Mwaipopo.

