



22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023

Ref: Not-INC-2023-0032

**Second Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment (INC-2)**

**Closing Statement from No More Butts (Civil Society Organization)**

Dear Secretariat,

No More Butts appreciates the opportunity to provide a Closing Statement to the Secretariat for INC-2. No More Butts is a subject matter expert on the environmental impacts of tobacco related waste, based out of Australia.

Tobacco filters are toxic, ubiquitous, **problematic** and **unnecessary**.

Made from cellulose acetate, tobacco filters (known as cigarette butts), are the single most littered form of plastic pollution by count. Estimates suggest that up to 4.5 trillion plastic cigarette butts are discarded into the environment every year, creating at least 300,000 tonnes of plastic pollution. They take between ten and 15 years to break down and release toxic chemicals and create tens of thousands of fibrous microplastics per filter. They are easily carried in stormwater runoff through drainage systems and eventually to local streams, rivers, and waterways. With each butt reported to pollute 40 liters of water, they are also acutely toxic to marine life.

Prioritizing tobacco filters as a **problematic and avoidable** (unnecessary) **plastic** product to **ban** under an established **criteria** is an important step. We call for an outright ban on the distribution and sale of plastic tobacco filters that are currently used in substantially all cigarettes sold globally.

Known to containing 7,000 chemicals, including ones that are proven to cause cancer, used tobacco filters (cigarette butts) contain **contaminants** that should also be considered in discussions around **consumption of chemicals of concern**.

Similarly, containing tens of thousands of microplastic fibers, we need to commit to the **eliminating the release** of this form of **plastic waste to water, soil and air**.

Persisting in nature for up to 15 years, tobacco filters must be included in discussions when considering remedies and mechanisms for **addressing existing plastic pollution** as part of the Treaty.

We must ensure a dual focus of **human health** and environmental health. Reported to have the potential to cause harm to human health, there is no evidence that tobacco filters provide benefit to human health.

We offer the opportunity to provide scientific research and further statements as a submission for any Intersessional meetings related to the development of the criteria to help members conclude on the necessity to support a ban on tobacco filters.

As many member states are a part to the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ("FCTC"), we encourage all delegates to proceed with Treaty negotiations noting that the tobacco industry should not play a role, either directly, or indirectly in these negotiations.

Kind regards,

Shannon Mead  
Executive Director  
**No More Butts Ltd**