



Presidential assent of Sierra Leone's Tobacco and Nicotine Control Act is a major win for public health in Africa.

Statement of Leonce SESSOU, Executive Secretary of the African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA)

For immediate release - Lomé, 28 April 2023

Passed into law by parliament on 3 August 2022, the global tobacco control community is relieved to know that the Tobacco and Nicotine Control Act of 2022 was finally assented to by the President of the Republic on Friday 14 April 2023 after fierce opposition by the tobacco industry.

The law will control and regulate the production, manufacturing, importation, packaging and labeling, advertising, promotion and sponsorship, sale and use of tobacco, tobacco products and other nicotine products in Sierra Leone in conformity with the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC). More so, it addresses all forms of tobacco and nicotine products including electronic smoking devices such as e-cigarettes, banning all manner of smoking in public places and all forms of advertisement of tobacco and nicotine products.

The tobacco epidemic is on the increase in Sierra Leone. The Demographic Health Survey (DHS2019) estimated that about 18% of men and 3% of women between 15-49 years in Sierra Leone are tobacco users and the prevalence of smoking is increasing mainly among young people, despite its harmful effects on health.

Full implementation of the law following this Presidential assent will help to bring down the rate of tobacco use in the country and hence, save the lives of Sierra Leoneans.

The African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) congratulates Sierra Leone for enacting such a robust tobacco control legislation and particularly commends H.E. Julius Maada Wonie Bio, President of the Republic, for his personal engagement to protecting the people of Sierra Leone from the devastating consequences of tobacco.

Stringent application of the WHO FCTC is the only way to effectively reduce the tobacco burden in any country. As such, we call on the Government of Sierra Leone to implement this new legislation swiftly and strictly.

Finally, we commend our civil society members and partners whose advocacy efforts helped achieve this important milestone.

ATCA remains committed to supporting Sierra Leone to fully implement the law.

Media contact: AYONG I. CALEB

Email: ayong@atca-africa.org

The African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) is a non-profit, non-political Pan-African network of civil society organizations headquartered in Lome, Togo. With membership in 39 countries, ATCA is dedicated to promoting public health and curbing the tobacco epidemic in the continent. The alliance is an Observer to WHO-FCTC Conference of Parties. It has a Special Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC, and is certified as a Public Charity organization by NGOsource.