Abstract

Although China´s National People´s Congress announced its decision to ratify the WHO´s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) on Sunday, August 28, 2005, fundamental challenges to tobacco control still exist. A survey at the No Smoking Day on May 31, 2004 in China showed that over 73% of respondents do not think that human society will be able to get rid of the consumption of tobacco products. Although the prevalence of smoking declined 1.2% from 1996 to 2002, the absolute number of smokers increased by 30 million during this period. It is estimated that smoking prevalence will decline 10% in the next 25 years. However, due to the population increase, the total number of tobacco consumers will be about the same as today, which is 320 million. As long as the tobacco industry continues to be significant in overall economic development, and as long as the government continues to play a significant role in tobacco production, the debate between tobacco production and tobacco control will continue. Although China has already made significant efforts with regard to tobacco control, it is still in the beginning of its long march towards improving the population´s health status by reducing tobacco consumption in China.

Keywords

tobacco; control; consumer; smoking; China