



Sudan's First Lady Widad Babiker and Khartoum State Minister of Health Professor Mamoun Hameida, as they listen to the video message of WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean, Dr Ala Alwan, introduced by WHO Representative Dr Anshu Banerjee, during the regional launch of the campaign in Khartoum for World No Tobacco Day, the World Health Organization (WHO) called upon all countries in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region to adopt and implement strict tobacco control laws and to resist tobacco industry interference in tobacco control during the commemoration of the Day on 31 May 2012.

The message of WHO Regional Director Dr Ala Alwan was introduced by Dr Anshu Banerjee, WHO Representative in Sudan, during the launch ceremony held at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum.

In his message, Dr Alwan emphasized that countries, governments, decision-makers and civil society must continue to counter tobacco industry tactics and plans on all fronts, as it is the only way to reduce the toll of preventable disease and death caused by tobacco use.

Dr Banerjee, during his speech, highlighted effective tobacco control strategies such as increasing taxation, pictorial warnings on tobacco products, restrictions on advertising and advocacy for tobacco use, preventing youth events organized by the industry, allocation of special places for tobacco use in public places outside main buildings, and allowing no role for the tobacco industry in the formulation of policies and strategies.

In her speech, Sudan's First Lady Widad Babiker acknowledged the support of WHO and all stakeholders involved in the fight against tobacco use, and assured the public that the Government will continue to support recommendations to stop intimidation by the tobacco industry and consequently reduce tobacco use in Sudan. The First Lady was the guest of honor of the event organized by the Ministry of Health.

Together with Khartoum State Minister of Health Professor Mamoun Hameida, Sudan's First Lady led the symbolic destruction of tobacco products outside the Friendship Hall, which highlighted the commemoration of the World No Tobacco Day 2012. In addition, a marathon was held earlier during the day to symbolize fitness and health for non-smokers.

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