

Senegal law bans smoking in public

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Senegal's health minister says lawmakers have banned tobacco advertising and smoking in public places.

Awa Marie Coll Seck said parliament passed the law unanimously on Friday. It imposes fines of up to \$100 for smoking in public and more than \$400,000 for violating the advertising ban, which also applies to sponsoring cultural and sporting events.

Anti-smoking groups warn of a looming public health crisis as tobacco companies target Africa as a potential growth market.

The American Cancer Society says the prevalence of cigarette smoking in the Middle East and Africa rose by 57 percent between 1990 and 2009.

In response, other countries in the region including Liberia and Ghana have banned public smoking, though enforcement has been uneven.

The ACS recently reported a 12 percent smoking rate among Senegalese boys.

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