



SFP Press Release

BRUSSELS, 18 December 2013

The Smoke Free Partnership (SFP) welcomes the compromise agreement that has been reached by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU on the Tobacco Products Directive today and their continuing commitment to delivering a strong TPD before the end of the current parliamentary legislature despite the repeated delays throughout the legislative process.

The EU is the biggest trading block in the world: given this fact, we should all acknowledge that the tobacco pandemic was largely created by us (the EU) and that, as significant offenders and key exporters of the tobacco problem to the rest of the world, we have a special responsibility to take tobacco control seriously.

In this context, today's agreement in COREPER is a major step forward in tobacco control and something that policy makers should be proud of. In line with Monday's provisional agreement with the European Parliament, Member States supported an agreement on mandatory pictorial warnings covering 65% of both sides to be placed at the top of the pack, a ban on characterising flavours without exception (with a temporary derogation of 6 years for menthol), strong tracking and tracing provisions for tobacco products across the entire supply chain and appropriate regulation for nicotine-containing products. Though the text is not perfect, Member States maintain the right to introduce more stringent measures such as plain packaging and the text advances EU tobacco control far beyond the legislation that is currently in force.

"We have good reasons to celebrate", said Florence Berteletti, Director of the Smoke Free Partnership: "As a result of the TPD's negotiations, the EU will force tobacco companies to make tobacco products less attractive to young people; this is exactly what tobacco companies feared the most and why they deployed such an "army" against the Tobacco Products Directive over the past 6 years. Yet, they lost. We should note that, without the leadership of the (few) EU policy makers who were brave enough to defend this file, today's success would not have been possible: those responsible for this dossier proved that values can still win over trade – that health can still win over profits and that the EU can still make a difference to people's lives in Europe and beyond."

SFP would like to congratulate the tobacco unit of DG SANCO, Commissioners Dalli and Borg, the Irish and Lithuanian Health Ministers and their teams, MEPs Linda McAvan, Karl Heinz Florenz, Carl Schlyter and Martina Anderson and so many other policy makers without whom this dossier would not have been a success for European citizens.

SFP remains strongly committed to ensuring that the compromise agreement will be adopted **without delay** in first reading by the European Parliament before the European elections in 2014.

Quotes

- *“Our research shows that by introducing large picture warnings on the front and back of the pack, regulating flavours, pack size and shape and other measures, the European Union is taking an important step forward in reducing the appeal of cigarettes to children. In the face of massive lobbying by the tobacco industry, public health has won through. The Directive also allows us to progress regulation of e-cigarettes, to ensure they are safe and effective and accessible to smokers. Now we must ensure that the European Parliament supports these crucial measures.”*
Jean King, Vice-President of SFP and Director of Tobacco Control at Cancer Research UK
- *“We are pleased that an agreement has been reached. The agreement should make it possible for the EU to adopt a piece of legislation which contributes to reducing smoking. We regret that the 75% health warnings proposed by the European Commission were not retained by the European Parliament and Council. We strongly encourage Members States to proceed to adopt plain packaging measures.”* **Susanne Løgstrup, SFP Treasurer and Director of the European Heart Network**

Notes to Editors

The Smoke Free Partnership is a strategic, independent and flexible partnership between Cancer Research UK (www.cancerresearchuk.org), the European Heart Network (www.ehnheart.org) and Action on Smoking and Health UK (www.ash.org.uk). We aim to promote tobacco control advocacy and policy research at EU and national levels in collaboration with other EU health organisations and EU tobacco control networks.

For additional information, evidence and data, please consult the SFP website at www.smokefreepartnership.eu

Media Enquiries

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