



Statement by the European Public Health Association on the Philip Morris International “Foundation for a Smoke-free World”

In a paper in The Lancet medical journal, Dr Derek Yach, President of the Philip Morris International Foundation for a Smoke-Free World, expressed a wish to work with others to create a new cadre of tobacco control researchers.¹ EUPHA recognises that, especially for those in countries where funding for health research may be limited, such an invitation from an organisation that will be spending \$1 billion over the next 12 years may seem attractive. However, we join with many health organisations, including the World Health Organisation,² to declare that we will not engage with or collaborate with the Philip Morris Foundation in any way and call upon all European public health organisations to do the same.

Now that we how Philip Morris and those acting on its behalf are already seeking to engage with discussions with policy makers to promote its new products, whose effectiveness is unproven and safety unknown,³ we also believe that it is important to remind European governments of their obligations under Article 5.3 of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control to exclude this industry from any role in tobacco control policy. In this respect, we note the detailed explanation by the Secretariat of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control as to why this new Foundation should be regarded as a clear attempt to breach several articles of the Convention.⁴

Our reasons are straightforward, and concur with other articles in medical journals^{5,6} and statements from health organisations.^{7,8} This is only the most recent example of this corporation announcing that it will support “independent” research. Yet, in all cases, this has simply been a means to divert attention from its efforts to distort science, to market its products to vulnerable groups, and to undermine evidence-based tobacco control strategies. Nothing in the Foundation’s publicity gives us any reason to believe that this new initiative will be any different from what has gone before. We know what works in tobacco control and we have seen what can be achieved in countries where these measures have been applied most effectively. Unfortunately, Philip Morris and other tobacco companies continue to challenge this evidence and to undermine these policies. To quote the response to the launch of this Foundation by International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, the “A tobacco-free world will not be built on the blood money of tobacco giants, or the pseudoscience they peddle”.⁹

If Philip Morris International was really interested in a smoke-free world, then it would simply stop manufacturing and aggressively promoting cigarettes. Without doing so, its claims cannot be taken seriously. Instead, the inescapable conclusion is that the creation of this Foundation is no more than another public relations exercise.

1 Yach D. Foundation for a smoke-free world. Lancet 2017; 390: 1807-1810.

2 [WHO Statement on Philip Morris funded Foundation for a Smoke-Free World.](#)

3 [Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems and Electronic Non-Nicotine Delivery Systems \(ENDS/ENNDS\)](#), Report by WHO, Conference of the Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, Seventh Session, Delhi, (7 – 12 November 2016), FCTC/COP/7/11.

4 [WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Secretariat’s statement on the launch of the Foundation for a Smoke-Free World](#)

5 Daube M, Moodie R, McKee M. Towards a smoke-free world? Philip Morris International's new Foundation is not credible. *Lancet* 2017; 390: 1722-1724

6 Chapman S. Tobacco giant wants to eliminate smoking . . . *BMJ* 2017; 358: j4443.

7 Tobacco Free Kids. [If Philip Morris Is Serious About a “Smoke-Free World,” It Should Stop Marketing Cigarettes, Fighting Efforts to Reduce Smoking.](#)

8 [American Cancer Society Statement on Philip Morris International Support of New Effort](#)

9 International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease. [The Union denounces PMI launch of a 'Foundation for a Smoke-free World'](#)



The European Public Health Association, or EUPHA in short, is an umbrella organisation for public health associations in Europe. Our network of national associations of public health represents around 20'000 public health professionals. Our mission is to facilitate and activate a strong voice of the public health network by enhancing visibility of the evidence and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals. EUPHA contributes to the preservation and improvement of public health in the European region through capacity and knowledge building. We are committed to creating a more inclusive Europe, narrowing all health inequalities among Europeans, by facilitating, activating, and disseminating strong evidence-based voices from the public health community and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals to achieve evidence-based change.

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