

## **HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR A TOBACCO FREE WORLD !**

International Petition at the occasion of World No Tobacco Day 2012

**On the occasion of World No Tobacco Day (insert number) health organisations/professional bodies and (insert number) individual health personnel from (insert number) countries call upon policy makers world wide not to let the tobacco industry undermine public health policy and request immediate and effective implementation of the provisions laid down in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.**

Tobacco consumption is the single most preventable cause of death and disability in the world. In 2008 tobacco killed more than 5 million people world wide – by 2030 the death toll will exceed 8 million a year, unless comprehensive tobacco control is fully implemented Tobacco kills more than tuberculosis, Aids/HIV and malaria combined. Tobacco use harms every organ of the body and kills up to half of its consumers. Furthermore, 600.000 non-smokers die from exposure to tobacco smoke in the world each year. There is no safe level of exposure to second hand smoke. Second hand smoke exposure contributes to a range of diseases including heart disease and many cancers. Socially disadvantaged populations are the most at risk and carry the greatest burden of premature death and disease. The consequences of tobacco consumption in all its forms severely impact socio-economic development of all countries around the world. The related health care costs are growing and the non-health care costs, such as loss of productivity, are staggering.

In their daily work, health professionals are constantly confronted with premature death and disease caused by tobacco consumption. For them every day is a new battle to reduce suffering and hardship of patients and their families who have been trapped by this deadly habit. Health care workers show leadership in combating tobacco consumption and act as role models for the general population so as to convince them to stop this disastrous habit. This personal and organisational effort needs to be supported by strong legislation. National policies and guidelines are needed to strengthen a tobacco free environment particularly in health services and health care environments with every tobacco user having access to evidence based and affordable cessation treatment programmes.

More than 170 WHO Member States (accounting for more than 85% of the global population) are Parties to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) which sets a global framework for reducing tobacco related death and disease. To prevent tobacco consumption and to protect people from the harmful effects of tobacco use in all its forms, national legislation has been passed in most countries, but significant progress still needs to be made.

Therefore, health professionals worldwide call upon their governments to immediately and effectively implement the provisions laid down and agreed to in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which include following measures:

- 1. Create smoke-free work and public spaces;**
- 2. Make evidence based cessation treatment programmes available, accessible and affordable for all tobacco users;**
- 3. Adopt tax and price measures to reduce tobacco consumption;**
- 4. Ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship;**
- 5. Require plain packaging of tobacco products**
- 6. Combat illicit trade in tobacco products:**
- 7. Introduce gender specific strategies in all tobacco control policies;**
- 8. Protect public health policy from the interference of the tobacco industry.**

So far, (insert number) health organisations/professional bodies and (insert number) individual health personnel from (insert number) countries endorse this call upon policy makers world wide. There is an urgent need to prevent the tobacco industry to undermine public health policy and to request immediate and effective implementation of the provisions laid down in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

It is only through a concerted effort of policy makers, researchers and practitioners that we will be able to stop this man-made epidemic !

Update 17-1-2012