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TOBACCO USE

FEAM would like to recall the recommendations made to the European Union (EU) in 2004:

1 – Specific responsibilities of the EU

1-1 Protection of workers against passive smoking.

The World Health Organization considers passive smoking to be the most important hazard to workers' health. Yet, in most Member states, workers are not effectively protected against it. The lack of serious actions in this field is a major public health issue. The current situation is unacceptable and the European Commission (DG SANCO and DG Employment) should ensure that smoke-free workplaces become a reality throughout the Union.

1-2 Smuggling

The ongoing fight against smuggling should be handled at European rather than national level. Smuggling has a significant impact on public health: low cost stimulates consumption and smuggled cigarettes tend to have a high tar and nicotine content. The economic impact is also real as smuggling deprives member states of a non-negligible income. In order to discourage smuggling, any illicit trade of tobacco should be punished with much more severe penalties.

1-3 Harmonization of prices and taxes

The wide variation in tobacco prices across the EU (from 1 to 7 € per pack) encourages smuggling and hampers a policy based on a high tobacco cost. Taxes should be harmonized and minimum prices should be set for all tobacco products. Within the EU, a maximum level of 100 cigarettes for import for personal use should be set. Financial penalties should also be markedly increased. The current situation gives a commercial advantage to Member states with low taxes, which is not acceptable from an ethical point of view. Tax-free shops within the EU (for example in Andorra) are not acceptable.

2- Framework Convention of tobacco control

2-1 The convention should be urgently ratified so that the EU can participate in the first conference for stakeholders in 2006.

2-2 The convention should be implemented.

The EU should encourage Member states to develop a comprehensive strategy including the protection of non-smokers. The protection of pregnant women and children under 4 years of age should be mandatory. Access by children to non smoke-free areas

such as smoking areas of restaurants should be forbidden. Pregnant women should be strongly discouraged from entering in these areas.

2-3 Ban on transnational advertising for tobacco should be implemented.

The European Commission (EC) should ensure that this ban is implemented. With regard to Formula 1 races, violations of this ban are extremely frequent. TV channels should be reminded of their obligations and violations should be punished. For F1 races located outside the EU, the logo of the cigarette companies should be electronically erased. It should be recalled that F1 races are the most effective pro-tobacco propaganda as far as children are concerned.

3 – Informing citizens and training health workers

3-1 As was the case from 1986 to 1990, the EU should prepare leaflets and documents to assist local authorities in informing the public and physicians.

3-2 The EC should regularly collect and disseminate information about smoking rates, trends and measures against smoking in the Member states. Each Member state should provide each year a short document commenting on the evolution of the fight against smoking and the number of smokers.

3-3 The EC should encourage the fight against smoking by funding the most effective actions.

4 – The EC should support research in this field

5 – Discouraging financial support to tobacco growers

The EC should also discourage any direct or indirect financial support to tobacco growers and at least reduce the support given within the framework of the agricultural policy.

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