

World No Tobacco Day 2006

Tobacco: deadly in any form or disguise

Tobacco addiction is a global epidemic that is increasingly ravaging countries and regions that can least afford its toll of disability, disease, lost productivity and death. The tobacco industry continues to put profits before life; its own expansion before the health of future generations; its own economic gain ahead of the sustainable development of struggling countries. Now, as nations have begun to fight back with a global strategy, and some countries begun to turn the course of the epidemic, tobacco companies continue to launch new weapons in the form of products disguised to appear less harmful and more attractive.

The core strategy of the tobacco industry is not new. It is the new variant of the "light", "mild" and "low tar" cigarette campaigns that were so effective in keeping customers, gaining new ones, and undermining tobacco control in the 20th century.

Nowadays, tobacco companies continue reassuring health concerned smokers by offering with their new products the illusion of safety. They continue to take their old and new customers to more insidious levels of deception by promoting and selling new products disguised under healthier names, fruity flavours or more attractive-looking packaging. In the meantime they continue their search for reduced-harm products... however, none have been thoroughly evaluated in human studies, so there is not reliable information on what is the toxicant exposure or health impact.

Honest accurate information on tobacco product ingredients, toxicant deliveries, and health effects is scarce for many of these products.

Fortunately, tobacco control professionals learnt valuable lessons about the tobacco industry approaches from the experiences and successes as well as failures of 20th century tobacco control efforts. Global public health also has the strength of the combined forces of the United Nations and its Member States through the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control – the WHO FCTC, a powerful tool to combat tobacco and the challenging approaches of its industry.

The purpose of World No Tobacco Day 2006 is to raise awareness about the existence of a great variety of deadly tobacco products in order to help people get accurate information, remove the disguise and unveil the truth behind tobacco products – traditional, new, and future. The slogan reads as follows:

TOBACCO: DEADLY IN ANY FORM OF DISGUISE

It is crucial to empower people and organizations with knowledge about the different tobacco products and their many forms and disguise in order to implement more effectively control tobacco and improve global health.

World No Tobacco Day 2006 has the following objectives:

- raise awareness about all forms of tobacco: **DEADLY IN ANY FORM**. Cigarettes, pipes, bidies, kreteks, clove cigarettes, snus, snuff, smokeless, cigars... they are all deadly;
- raise awareness about all types and names and flavours; **DEADLY IN ANY DISGUISE**. Mild, light, low tar, full flavour, fruit flavoured, chocolate flavoured, natural, additive-free, organic cigarettes, PREPS (Potentially Reduced-Exposure Products), harm-reduced... they are all deadly;
- raise awareness about the need for strict regulation and encourage its implementation.

All of these products and practices are deadly and addictive and thus the absence of truthful information deprives even well intended people the ability to make healthy choices. Whether the disguise is perpetuated by multinational corporations or by well intended, but uninformed shops, families, and individuals, the end product can be the same: use of products that carry unnecessary risks of disease, debilitation and death. The truth about tobacco can empower people to improve their own health, as well as the health of their families, friends, and others in their community.

JOIN PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS AROUND THE WORLD ON THE CELEBRATION OF WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY 2006. START RAISING AWARENESS NOW ABOUT TOBACCO: DEADLY IN ANY FORM OR DISGUISE