Dear President Barroso,

We are writing to you as a group of NGOs, charities, researchers, industry representatives and MEPs representing a majority of Member States and every major political group, to urge you to bring forward the proposal for a revision of the Tobacco Products Directive at the beginning of 2012, as promised.

Following the European Parliament's joint resolution of 15 September 2011 on the UN Summit on Non Communicable Diseases\(^1\) it is clear that the Parliament wants to begin work on this revision as soon as possible.

As a signatory of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control\(^2\) the European Union has a responsibility to implement measures which reduce tobacco use across Europe, and the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive is central to that. As this report will be so important, and undoubtedly controversial, the Council and Parliament will need time to thoroughly scrutinise and negotiate an effective revision. If we do not begin work at the beginning of 2012 we could be in real danger of having to restart the whole process after the 2014 elections. Given our commitment to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control this is simply not an option.

It seems the proposals are being held up whilst the Commission works further on the Impact Assessment, after extreme pressure from the pro-tobacco lobby. Impact assessments are of course central to creating responsible legislation, however, as stated in the Parliament resolution on guaranteeing independent impact assessments,\(^3\) they "must not lead to more bureaucracy and unnecessary delays in the legislative procedure" and "should not be abused as a means of holding up unwanted legislation". Moreover impact assessments are not a replacement for the policy process carried out in the Council and Parliament.

We are of the view that further delays are not acceptable, and would appreciate if the Commission could inform us of a definitive timetable for the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive.

Yours sincerely,

Members of the European Parliament
Industry representatives
NGOs, charities and researchers


Members of the European Parliament

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