



JOINT PRESS RELEASE – World No Tobacco Day

Foundation Against Cancer Belgium, European Cancer Leagues, Smoke Free Partnership

Brussels, 31 May 2015

LUK JOOSSENS, TOBACCO CONTROL EXPERT AT THE ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN CANCER LEAGUES AND THE FOUNDATION AGAINST CANCER BELGIUM, IS AWARDED SPECIAL RECOGNITION BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Each year, on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day on 31 May, the World Health Organization (WHO) gives recognition to individuals or organizations for their accomplishments in the area of tobacco control. A World No Tobacco Day reception and award ceremony for Mr Luk Joossens will take place on 1 June at the European Parliament (18.30 – 20.00h) in Brussels.

WHO Director-General's Special Recognition Certificate for Luk Joossens

Mr Joossens is being recognized as Europe's longtime leading expert in illicit tobacco trade, and one of the leading figures in the European tobacco control community for over thirty years. WHO congratulates him on contributing to “the successes of tobacco control countless times over the past thirty years at national, European and international level, particularly in the area of illicit tobacco trade” as well as on his achievements at the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL) in his “role in the revision of the European Union's Tobacco Products Directive... particularly in regard to discussions regarding the tracking and tracing of tobacco products.”

He is widely acknowledged for his precise analysis and limitless engagement on this topic in Belgium and beyond, and has endeavoured to fight the tobacco industry and their efforts to slow down and block the recent ‘Tobacco Products Directive’, by teaming up with other tobacco control experts and advocating for better tobacco control in Europe. The tobacco control community welcomed the adoption of the Directive in 2014, and are working hard to support its transposition in the Member States by 2016.

For many years, the lobby strategy of the tobacco industry has been to warn of increased incidence of illicit trade of tobacco products as a reason to encourage inaction on tax increases. Luk Joossens works in collaboration with tobacco control experts, in particular the Smoke Free Partnership, who together bring this issue to the fore, and propose solutions such as better traceability mechanisms for tobacco products.

Publication in Tobacco Control (British Medical Journal)

We are also pleased to announce that an article titled ‘Assessment of the European Union’s illicit trade agreements with the four major Transnational Tobacco Companies’, a scientific review co-authored by Luk Joossens has been accepted for publication in Tobacco Control of the British Medical Journal.

The article evaluates the agreements between the tobacco industry and the EU and recommends they not be renewed in 2016. This article will be available on Friday 29th May.

For more information on the World No Tobacco Day and Award Reception at the European Parliament, email the Association of European Cancer Leagues at “ECL (at) europeancancerleagues.org”.

Information on the WHO World No Tobacco Day 2015 Awards is on the WHO website <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/tobacco/news/news/2015/05/world-no-tobacco-day-awards-2015> and <http://www.who.int/tobacco/wntd/awards2015/en/>

Contact the **Foundation Against Cancer Belgium** at <http://www.cancer.be/>

The SFP Factsheet on Illicit Trade is available from the **Smoke Free Partnership** <http://www.smokefreepartnership.eu/>