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23/07/2012 10:19

To

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PH3/DOH/GB@DOH,

cc

bcc

Subject New Zealand issues plain packaging proposal for consultation and retail display ban comes into force today, 23 July 2012

History: This message has been replied to and forwarded.

Dear colleagues (from the WHO/WPRO Plain Packaging Technical Meeting January 2012)

Today New Zealand has launched its tobacco plain packaging consultation.

This follows the earlier decision in April 2012 when the NZ Government agreed in principle to introduce a plain-packaging regime for tobacco products (in alignment with Australia), subject to consultation.

The purpose of the consultation process being launched today is to provide the public, the health sector, non-governmental organisations, business interests and New Zealand's trade partners with the opportunity to comment on the proposal and have their views considered before the Government finally decides how to proceed. The consultation is open for submissions for 75 days, until 5 October 2012.

Here is a link to the consultation documents:

<http://www.health.govt.nz/consultation/plainpackaging>

(The official statement announcing the consultation is attached below, and will soon be available at: <http://www.beehive.govt.nz/minister/tariana-turia>)

The purpose of the consultation documents is to:

- set out the Government's plain-packaging proposal
- gather the views of interested individuals, businesses and organisations
- inform New Zealand's trade partners and invite their comment
- seek additional information relevant to the proposal.

The consultation has also been notified to the World Trade Organization Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade.

Here is a link to the earlier official statement announcing the agreement in principle in April:

<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/moving-towards-plain-packaging-tobacco-products>

The agreement in principle was based on the NZ Government's assessment that plain packaging of tobacco would:

- be an effective measure to reduce the appeal of tobacco products and strengthen the impact of mandated pictorial health warnings
- build on and support other measures to reduce the death toll and costly disease burden caused by smoking
- help meet New Zealand's international commitments under the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
- be a significant step towards the 2025 goal of a smokefree New Zealand.

The NZ Government has not made any final decisions on whether to legislate for plain packaging of tobacco products in New Zealand. Those decisions are subject to the outcome of this public consultation.

Coincidentally, today also sees the introduction into force of New Zealand's retail tobacco display prohibition:

<http://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/retailers-reminded-about-new-tobacco-control-laws>

<http://www.health.govt.nz/news-media/news-items/next-steps-tobacco-control>

Please forgive any cross-postings, and please feel free to share the information contained in this email.

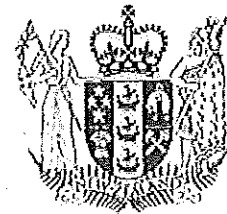
kind regards

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Hon Tariana Turia
Associate Minister of Health



Media Statement

Monday 23 July

Plain packaging next step in tobacco control

More action to reduce the single largest cause of preventable death and disease in New Zealand is being considered, with consultation now underway for new hard-hitting controls over tobacco packaging.

Under new law that comes into effect today, tobacco products can no longer be displayed in public view in retail outlets, including dairies, supermarkets, petrol stations and convenience stores.

But once sold, tobacco packaging can still be a powerful marketing tool in the public eye.

"Therefore, smoke-free measures will not stop at display bans. I am pleased to announce today's launch of a consultation document on proposals to stop tobacco companies from using the design and appearance of their packaging to promote their deadly products", says Associate Health Minister Tariana Turia.

"Australia has already decided to introduce plain packaging from December this year which will ensure that tobacco company branding imagery cannot detract from public health messages and images featuring the tragic consequences of smoking."

"In April this year, I announced the Government had agreed in principle to adopt similar moves in New Zealand, subject to this public consultation. Today I am launching the consultation."

The consultation is being run through the Ministry of Health, and continues until 5 October. A consultation document and information on how to make submissions have been published on the Ministry of Health website.

The purpose of the consultation document, *Proposal to introduce plain packaging of tobacco products in New Zealand* is to:

- set out the Government's plain packaging proposal and regulatory impact analysis
- gather the views of interested individuals, businesses and organisations
- inform New Zealand's trade partners and invite their comment
- seek additional information relevant to the proposal.

"Around 4500 to 5000 New Zealanders die each year from their smoking, or exposure to the smoke of others," Mrs Turia said.

"The Government is serious about reducing the enormous harm, suffering, and loss of life that smoking causes and has set a goal for New Zealand to be essentially smokefree by 2025."

"Plain packaging offers a powerful tool to help achieve these important public health aims."

"There is strong evidence that plain packaging would further reduce the appeal of tobacco products and smoking in general, strengthen the impact of mandated pictorial health warnings, and reduce false perceptions about the harm from tobacco products."

"It would build on other measures to reduce the costly disease burden caused by smoking, and make a significant step towards the 2025 goal of a smokefree New Zealand."

"Plain packaging would help us to meet New Zealand's international commitments under the global tobacco treaty, the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. I am confident that we can bring in a plain packaging regime that would also meet our international trade and investment obligations as well."

"But we are committed to continuing a careful and robust process to develop the policy before we make final decisions," Mrs Turia said.

"This public consultation process is a transparent way of reviewing the evidence and testing the case for plain packaging, and giving the public, the health sector, business interests and our trading partners a chance to have their views considered."

Final decisions on whether or how to introduce plain packaging legislation will not be made until after all the responses of the consultation process have been considered.

ENDS

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