

**August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

Dr. Margaret Chan  
Director General  
World Health Organization  
Geneva

**Open Letter**

Tobacco trade fair “Inter-tabac” in Dortmund, Germany

Dear Dr. Chan,

from September 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014 Germany is to host the worldwide leading trade fair for tobacco products and smoking requirements, the “Inter-tabac” in Dortmund. This trade fair is being organized and carried through by a city-owned German company, the Westfalenhallen Dortmund GmbH in close cooperation with the tobacco industry. It has been increasing in size ever since it was first held in the 1970s and is now attracting more and more foreign visitors and exhibitors. It is now in its own words the “leading business and communications platform for the tobacco industry and the tobacco goods business.” Decisions made at the “Inter-tabac” in Dortmund will definitely have an impact on the consumption of tobacco worldwide.

We, the signatories to this letter, view this tobacco trade fair like any other of its kind as a form of the promotion of tobacco products and are deeply concerned that this trade fair aims at and will lead to an increase of the consumption of tobacco products worldwide.

According to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, tobacco advertising and promotion is defined as any form of commercial communication, recommendation or action with the aim, effect or likely effect of promoting a tobacco product or tobacco use either directly or indirectly. We are of the opinion that tobacco trade fairs like the “Inter-tabac” in Dortmund should be banned in countries which have signed FCTC. We therefore strongly protest against the city of Dortmund for allowing one of its companies to organize a tobacco trade fair.

In February 2014 an offshoot of the “Inter-tabac” in Dortmund, the “Inter-tabac ASIA”, which was to be held in Bali, could be prevented following an unprecedented protest movement originating in Germany. The cancellation of

“Inter-tabac ASIA” has been cheerfully embraced by the worldwide tobacco control community. We are confident, that the trade fair “Inter-tabac” in Dortmund can be stopped as well, if an international protest movement can be formed. We therefore respectfully ask you to support us in our efforts and to issue a statement, in which WHO declares tobacco trade fairs like “Inter-tabac” to be a form of promotion of tobacco products and in which WHO disapproves of tobacco trade fairs to be held in countries which have signed FCTC.

Sincerely,

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