

Press Release

Dalli's successor must not delay the new Tobacco Products Directive and must ensure complete transparency

Forum Rauchfrei calls on the EU Commission to hold on to its plan of toughening the Tobacco Products Directive and to release the long-announced directive before the end of the year. Under no circumstances may Health Commissioner John Dalli's resignation lead to a delay or dilution of tobacco control plans. Furthermore Johannes Spatz, spokesman of Forum Rauchfrei, demands a complete clarification of the goings-on leading to John Dalli's resignation.

Europe must follow Australia's example and allow solely the sale of plain cigarette packages without brand logos and with large pictorial warnings instead. Tobacco products are to be sold under the counter only. The sale of orally consumed Snus must remain to be interdicted in Europe.

Johannes Spatz sees an urgent need for the EU Commission to implement the World Health Organization's Guidelines to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. He asks of the new Health Commissioner to strictly abide by the guideline on transparency which states: „Whenever possible, interactions should be conducted in public, for example through public hearings, public notice of interactions, disclosure of records of such interactions to the public.“

The European Union has ratified the World Health Organization's Framework Convention on Tobacco Control as did more than 170 countries until today. In the law's preamble, the need to „be alert to any efforts by the tobacco industry to undermine or subvert tobacco control efforts“ is emphasized.

But how careless even the EU Commission's President, José Manuel Barroso, acts with respect to the tobacco industry was made clear by a summons on an internet platform of British American Tobacco's Foundation for Future Studies last year. There Barroso called for participating in a survey on Europe's future. (<http://www.forum-rauchfrei.de/files/BATBuB.pdf>).

After citizens from many European countries had stated their protest on the platform against this appearance and after Forum Rauchfrei had written a letter of protest to the President on 20. November 2011, the President's picture and his summons were taken off the platform without comment (www.Uniteddreamsofeurope.eu). Later on, Health Commissioner John Dalli responded in the President's name to Forum Rauchfrei. Dalli claimed that Barroso's participation in the tobacco foundation's marketing campaign did not have any relation to the tobacco industry. (<http://www.forum-rauchfrei.de/files/AD.pdf>).

Spatz: „If You get too close to the tobacco industry's fire, You get Your fingers burned.“

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