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WMA condemns Tobacco Company for Challenging Plain Cigarette Packaging

The World Medical Association has condemned the legal action being taken by the tobacco company Philip Morris against the Australian Government's legislation on plain cigarette packaging.

Dr. Mukesh Haikerwal, an Australian family physician and chair of the WMA Council, said he profoundly regretted the decision of Philip Morris and he urged other countries to follow the example of the Australian Government in banning logos on cigarette packets.

This week the Australian legislation to enforce plain packaging of cigarettes completed its passage through Parliament and is due to come into force in December 2012.

Dr. Haikerwal said: 'Australia is to be congratulated on becoming the first country in the world to introduce such legislation. When it is implemented, it will save lives. I hope this will encourage other governments around the world to follow the same path. They must not be bullied by the tobacco industry.

'Governments have a duty to do what they can to help smokers give up and choose a healthier way of life'.

23rd November 2011

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