

The Union supports SEATCA's campaign against latest attempts by PMI to undermine tobacco control

The Union supports SEATCA's campaign against the Philip Morris International (PMI) funded Foundation for a Smoke-free World (FSFW), which is attempting to hijack the "Smoke-Free Index" concept to further its own corporate agenda.

"The FSFW-funded 'smoke-free index' is yet another obvious marketing ploy intended to undermine tobacco control policy and promote the business interests of PMI," said Dr Gan Quan, Director of Tobacco Control at the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union).

"PMI claims a commitment to reducing harm, but at the same time is continuing to promote the sale of cigarettes around the world, whilst actively interfering in public health policies which are proven to reduce tobacco use."

The FSFW has been reaching out to research organisations, NGOs and academics in search of partners to legitimise its attempts to promote smoking alternatives such as e-cigarettes and heated-tobacco products like IQOS, which PMI aggressively markets in low- and middle-income countries.

The public health community remains sceptical of the FSFW's agenda, however, and The Union has joined high profile organisations like WHO and hundreds of others to publicly reject any form of collaboration with foundation.

In the past month, two regional meetings organised by the FSFW to inform the development of its "Smoke-Free Index" tool, scheduled to be held in Bangkok and Istanbul, have been cancelled due to a lack of confirmed attendees, following urgent calls by the public health community to boycott such events.

Dr Gan Quan said: "The public health community has been strong and vocal in its refusal to partner with the FSFW, and it is encouraging to see that this is working. It is important that we continue to stand against big tobacco, and support campaigns like SEATCA's which expose the industry's manipulative and deceitful tactics."