MEDIA INFORMATION
For immediate release

New Extreme EU Tobacco Rules: Brussels Must be Held Accountable for Over-Regulation

Brussels, May 19, 2017 – From May 20, tobacco products placed on the market in EU countries will have to comply with the Tobacco Products Directive (TPD2), a raft of draconian rules that will impact consumers and businesses across the Union without meeting its intended goals.

“This is yet another example of Brussels-led over-regulation”, comments Ben Townsend, JTI’s EU Affairs Vice-President. “TPD2 will not achieve its public health goals. It will, however, stifle consumer choice and have huge consequences for local economies, jeopardizing thousands of legitimate businesses and employees, from farmers to packaging manufacturers, and tobacco producers to retailers.”

TPD2 mandates a wide-reaching set of measures for products and packaging, including large pictorial health warnings that take up the majority of the pack surface – dramatically reducing the space available for product information to consumers and brand designs. Many pack formats have also been banned under the false pretext that this will drive smoking levels lower. This includes the prohibition of smaller cigarette packs and pouch sizes, which is likely to backfire badly by forcing consumers to buy larger formats and therefore spend more money. The Directive will also outlaw menthol cigarettes from 2020.

“TPD2 is a hugely complex, burdensome and restrictive piece of legislation. To top it off, some EU countries were encouraged to go above and beyond TPD2 requirements by introducing even more outlandish measures such as plain packaging”, adds Ben Townsend. “As a result, consumers will come across different regulations for the same product in different countries, which makes a mockery of the European Commission’s original aim to improve the functioning of the internal market”.

The Commission’s initial Impact Assessment stated that TPD2 would create a 2% drop in consumption over five years (2021) – but it had to acknowledge that this figure was just ‘a best effort estimation’.

“TPD2 is an attack on legitimate businesses and adult consumers’ freedom of choice. Even the President of the Commission recently said that they are wrong in over-regulating and that one of the reasons citizens are stepping away from the European project is that EU law-makers are interfering in too many domains of their private lives. It’s time for Brussels bureaucrats to listen; they must be held accountable when the review of the Directive is published in 2021”, concludes Ben Townsend.

###

What's in TPD2?

- Large pictorial health warnings covering the front and back of tobacco packs (65% each side)
- Complete ban on menthol cigarettes (by 2020)
- Ban on small packs (below 20 cigarettes) and hand-rolling tobacco pouch sizes (below 30g)
- EU-wide tracking and tracing of tobacco products (expected from 2019)
- New controls on e-cigarettes – regulated EU-wide for the first time

About JTI

JTI (Japan Tobacco International) is a leading international tobacco company with operations in more than 120 countries. It is the global owner of both Winston, the number two cigarette brand in the world, and Camel outside the USA and has the largest share in sales for both brands. Other global brands include Mevius, LD and Natural American Spirit. With its internationally recognized brand Logic, JTI is also a major player in the e-cigarette market and has, since 2011, been present in the heated tobacco category with Ploom. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, JTI employs more than 26,500 people and was awarded Global Top Employer for three consecutive years. Its core revenue in the fiscal year ended December 31, 2016, was USD 10.5 billion. JTI is a member of the Japan Tobacco Group of Companies. For more information, visit www.jti.com.

For further information, please contact:

JTI Press Office
Tel: +41 22 703 0291
e-mail: pressoffice@jti.com