**MEDIA INFORMATION**
For immediate release

# Transparency, Sustainability and Innovation: Three Endangered Fundamentals the New WHO Director General Must Tackle

**Geneva, May 24, 2017 –** The World Health Assembly (WHA) has just appointed the World Health Organization's (WHO) new Director General, amid controversy around the UN agency's practices. JTI has witnessed a number of abuses over the past years that are putting at risk three fundamental areas where businesses play a key role: transparency, sustainability and innovation. We trust that current practices will be carefully scrutinized by the new WHO lead.

1. **Transparency –** A culture of censorship and exclusion has developed, notably at the last WHO FCTC[1] Conference of the Parties, where "open" debates were held behind closed doors, expelling journalists and the public, in direct contravention of the United Nation's fundamental principles. Any individual or organization who is seen to consult with anyone in the tobacco sector, including government representatives and experts with legitimate credentials, is in the WHO's line of sight. The WHO has so abused these practices that it is now putting pressure on other organizations, notably UN Agencies, to follow the same dogmatic approach. It is therefore no surprise that the three WHO candidates have made transparency a key theme of their campaign. We expect the new Director General to terminate this culture of secrecy.

2. **Sustainability** – Regrettably, the current WHO leadership has a narrow vision of the developing world's realities. Bullying tobacco farmers and governments to blindly follow its exclusion tactics, the WHO has been dangerously jeopardizing many programs which enhance tobacco communities' livelihoods and meet the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. This includes Public Private Partnerships that have delivered concrete results which can only be achieved through sustained and collaborative efforts. Conversely, if companies didn't take their responsibility towards society seriously, the

[1] Framework Convention on Tobacco Control

same organization would no doubt point fingers at them. It is crucial for the new WHO regime to acknowledge the invaluable expertise, resources and rigor that legitimate companies can and should continue to provide to communities where they are established.

3. **Innovation –** The WHO's FCTC continues to recommend the prohibition or restriction of e-cigarettes[2], even though these products do not contain tobacco and have the potential to reduce health risks. We are looking forward to a new direction at the WHO which encourages innovation and choice through research and development instead of sliding into a contagious trend of product bans.

"The WHO has become ideology-driven, engaging in a fight against businesses, tobacco growers, and vapers when it should open itself up to scrutiny and see the merit of initiatives that are actually delivering results, no matter what individual positions are", comments Michelle McKeown, Corporate Communications Vice President at JTI. "We trust the new WHO Director General will take this opportunity to get back to basics by tackling the issue of transparency, keeping an objective view of sustainability in the developing world, and accepting that the innovation of next-generation products can help address some of the organization's concerns."

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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.

[2] ENDS/ENNDS : Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems / Electronic Non-Nicotine Delivery Systems