

[DRAFT sign-on letter to PMI]

[DATE]

André Calantzopoulos
Chief Executive Officer
Philip Morris International
Avenue de Rhodanie 50 1007
Lausanne, Switzerland

Dear Mr. Calantzopoulos,

The undersigned organizations, representing global health, human rights, consumer protection, medical and other organizations, call on you to immediately cease the production, marketing and sale of cigarettes. This action is at least half a century overdue, and tens of millions have died unnecessarily as a direct result of tobacco use.

In 1954, Philip Morris promised to “stop business tomorrow” if it became apparent that cigarettes are harmful to health.¹ This promise was repeated for decades, most recently in 1997 by Philip Morris CEO Geoffrey Bible, who responded to the question “What he would do with his manufacturing plants if scientists proved that cigarettes were a cause of cancer?” by saying he would “shut it down instantly.”² We know from Philip Morris’ own internal documents that the company was aware that cigarettes were harmful even in 1954; by 1997 Mr. Bible’s response was simply absurd in the face of overwhelming scientific proof.

Cigarettes cannot be “re-engineered” to make them acceptable in global commerce; they are inherently defective. There is no safe level of consumption, and they provide no necessary benefit to their consumers.

Given the deadly nature of tobacco smoke, and the extremely addictive nature of nicotine, the marketing and sale of cigarettes violates several universally accepted human rights, in particular the right to life and the right to health. In May 2017, a human rights organization that had been engaged in voluntary collaboration with PMI, the Danish Institute for Human Rights, ended its relationship with your company and concluded that *“According to the UNGPs [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights] companies should avoid causing or contributing to adverse impacts on human rights. Where such impacts occur, companies should immediately cease the actions that cause or contribute to the impacts. Tobacco is deeply harmful to human health, and there can be no doubt that the production and marketing of tobacco is irreconcilable with the human right to health. For the tobacco industry, the UNGPs [United Nations Guiding Principles on*

1 Weissman, George, Philip Morris Inc. Facts versus fancy. 26 February 1954. Bates No. 1002366389-1002366397.

2 Cerriden M. Tobacco exec stuns observers. Dallas Morning News. 22 August 1997. Bates No. 86329862-86329865.

Business and Human Rights] therefore require the cessation of the production and marketing of tobacco.³

The front page of PMI's own website depicts a video of employees "Designing a Smoke-Free Future.⁴" Your rationale includes "because...society expects us to act responsibly.⁵" If, by your own logic, acting responsibly requires you to stop selling cigarettes, by what ethical rubric can you continue to sell them? The only possible explanation is that you feel you can still profit from doing so. That decision - to continue a business model that you have admitted is irresponsible - is unacceptable. And to continue profiting from a product that you know will kill a significant proportion of your customers when used as intended is monstrous.

PMI, its shareholders, and you personally have been enriched while knowingly killing your customers. You have it in your immediate power to change the fate of millions of people, perhaps hundreds of millions. Do the right thing by immediately ceasing the production, marketing and sale of cigarettes.

Signed,

3 Danish Institute for Human Rights, *Human Rights assessment in Philip Morris International*, Web, May 4, 2017. Found at <https://www.humanrights.dk/news/human-rights-assessment-philip-morris-international>.

4 Philip Morris International, <https://www.pmi.com>.

5 Philip Morris International, <https://www.pmi.com/who-we-are/designing-a-smoke-free-future>.