Hundreds of Millions in Latin America Face Increasing Risk of Tobacco-Related Deaths and Disease

Chile Has Highest Smoking Rate in Latin America-Women and Girls Face Imminent Health Threat According to 4th Edition of The Tobacco Atlas

Santiago, Chile – June 27, 2013 – Latin American countries are facing an increasing risk from tobacco-related deaths and disease according to the American Cancer Society and World Lung Foundation, co-publishers of *The Tobacco Atlas – 4th Edition*. Chilean Minister of Health Dr. Jaime Mañalich joined the two organizations and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), for the release of the Spanish version of the Atlas. Together they called for immediate attention to this looming health crisis that will escalate without the implementation of proven interventions.

The Tobacco Atlas, and its companion website, TobaccoAtlas.org graphically detail the scale of the tobacco epidemic, progress that has been made in tobacco control, and the latest products and tactics being deployed by the highly profitable tobacco industry – such as the use of new media, trade litigation, and aggressive development of smokeless products.

Women and Girls, Youth at Increasing Risk

There are currently 145 million smokers in Latin America, with an estimated 9.7 million smokers in Chile, which has the highest overall smoking prevalence in the region. Chilean women have the highest smoking rates in Latin America, with an estimated smoking prevalence of about 37%. Male daily smoking prevalence is also high, at 44%. About 40% of girls (13 – 15 years) currently use cigarettes, compared to 28% of boys of the same age. There are about 14,000 deaths each year (male and female) related to tobacco smoking in Chile.

The Economics of Tobacco

Chile has some of the most affordable cigarettes in the world (ranking 45 out of 170 countries) – in comparison with other Latin American countries. Cigarette affordability is linked to smoking prevalence. In Chile, the anti-smoking budget is about one million U.S. dollars, while tobacco tax income is about $1.2 billion. The health costs of smoking among the population cost the Chilean government an estimated $1.14 billion dollars a year.

Recent Significant Progress in Chile

In February, 2013, the Chilean president signed national tobacco legislation to reduce the harm caused by tobacco. This comprehensive law, in-line with the requirements of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) treaty, aims to prohibit indoor smoking in public spaces, ban tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship including points of sale, prohibit additives to tobacco products during the manufacturing process, and cover 50% of package space with warnings on tobacco health consequences. In addition, the legislation, which was enacted in March 2013, calls for stronger monitoring of tobacco measures and higher fines for non-compliance.

Dr Jaime José Mañalich Muxi, Ministry of Health, the Republic of Chile, was awarded a WHO Director-General Special Recognition Awards on World No Tobacco Day Awards May 31, 2013, for his efforts to address the tobacco burden.

“Chile has made critical progress this year by passing legislation to reduce the deadly harm tobacco causes its users and population, especially to women and girls,” said John R. Seffrin, PhD, chief executive officer of the American Cancer Society. “We applaud this commitment to stem the tide of tobacco - the most important cancer risk factor in Latin America, with 26% of all cancer deaths and 84% of all lung-cancer deaths in this region

attributed to tobacco."

In 2011, according to *The Tobacco Atlas*, tobacco use killed almost six million people, with nearly 80 percent of these deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries. If trends continue, one billion people will die from tobacco use and exposure during the 21st century – one person every six seconds. Globally, tobacco-related deaths have nearly tripled in the past decade, and tobacco is responsible for more than 15 percent of all male deaths and 7 percent of female deaths. Peter Baldini, chief executive officer, World Lung Foundation, said. "With the publication of this Atlas, we are placing into the hands of governments, journalists and advocates a blueprint to help reduce the massive wave of death and disease that is coming should no actions be taken. Chile may have the highest burden of tobacco use throughout Latin America but if there is a political will, the strategies and tools we urge in the Atlas will help the country reverse the tide of its epidemic. "

About the Authors

The three authors of The Tobacco Atlas bring a deep knowledge of the tobacco epidemic and its solutions. Michael Eriksen, Sc.D., is a professor and founding director of the Institute of Public Health at Georgia State University. He has been a senior advisor to the World Health Organization (WHO), and was director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health. Hana Ross, Ph.D., is an economist and managing director of international tobacco control research at the American Cancer Society. She has published more than 70 articles and independent reports on issues related to tobacco taxation, cigarette prices, costs of smoking, illicit trade and other economic aspects of tobacco control. Judith Mackay, M.D., is a Fellow of the Royal Colleges of Physicians of Edinburgh and London, and a special advisor at World Lung Foundation. She is also a senior policy advisor to the World Health Organization (WHO) and a director of the Asian Consultancy on Tobacco Control.

About the Fourth Edition

The Fourth Edition of The Tobacco Atlas was launched in English on March 21, 2012, at the World Conference on Tobacco OR Health in Singapore, a decade after the publication of the first edition. The Atlas presents the most up-to-date information on tobacco and tobacco control available in a highly graphic, easily understandable format. Data contained within the Atlas is gathered from multiple sources and validated to ensure it presents a holistic and accurate picture of tobacco and tobacco control across the globe. The updated version is also available online at TobaccoAtlas.org, where policy makers, public health practitioners, advocates and journalists may interact with the data and create customizable charts, graphs and maps.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers saving lives and fighting for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. As the largest voluntary health organization, the Society's efforts have contributed to a 20 percent decline in cancer death rates in the U.S. since 1991, and a 50 percent drop in smoking rates. Thanks in part to our progress nearly 14 million Americans who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will celebrate more birthdays this year. As we mark our 100th birthday in 2013, we're determined to finish the fight against cancer. We're finding cures as the nation's largest private, not-for-profit investor in cancer research, ensuring people facing cancer have the help they need and continuing the fight for access to quality health care, lifesaving screenings, clean air, and more. For more information, to get help, or to join the fight, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org. For more information on our global programs, visit global.cancer.org and follow @ACSGlobal on Twitter.

About World Lung Foundation

World Lung Foundation (WLF) was established in response to the global epidemic of lung disease, which kills 10 million people each year. The organization also works on maternal and infant mortality reduction initiatives. WLF improves global health by improving local health capacity, by supporting operational research, by developing public policy and by delivering public education. The organization's areas of emphasis are tobacco control, maternal and infant mortality prevention, tuberculosis, asthma and child lung health. For more information, please visit worldlungfoundation.org.

For the Spanish language version of this press release, contact busola.afolabi@cancer.org.