

Philip Morris International Spin-off Could Have Devastating Health Effects in Developing Nations

Atlanta 2008/01/31 -Atlanta, January 31, 2008 – "Philip Morris International's announced spin-off and well-planned launch of deadly new products are at odds with the company's claims to be a responsible business and maker of a 'product intended for adults'. Despite a feel-good corporate social responsibility campaign, Philip Morris International's new products and marketing schemes are aimed squarely at the developing world and could pose the most serious public health and economic threat yet for these nations.

"The biggest tobacco company in the world has announced that it will free itself from the regulations and public pressure it faces in the United States and many of the industrialized countries to return to its core mission - trying to lure and addict a new market of vulnerable users, including children, and circumventing what have been increasingly effective efforts to curb tobacco use. In the United States, tobacco firms have been held accountable for using misleading terms and marketing campaigns that appeal to children. Overseas, regulations are often weaker, but many countries are adopting the proven measures in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control public health treaty, which include protecting people from deadly secondhand smoke and requiring truthful warning labels on products.

"Philip Morris International's plans to introduce new products, including one with higher nicotine levels and some with sweetened flavors that appeal to children, will have unprecedented consequences in nations already struggling for a better quality of life. Tobacco causes the death of one of every two smokers worldwide, and there is simply no safe way to consume it."

The American Cancer Society is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by saving lives, diminishing suffering and preventing cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Founded in 1913 and with national headquarters in Atlanta, the Society has 13 regional Divisions and local offices in 3,400 communities, involving millions of volunteers across the United States. For more information, visit www.cancer.org.

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