



COALITION QUÉBÉCOISE
POUR LE CONTRÔLE DU TABAC

4529, rue Clark, Montréal, Québec H2T 2T3 • Tél. : (514) 598-5533 • Téléc. : (514) 598-5283 • coalition@cqct.qc.ca

PRESS RELEASE

200 Quebec organizations to Health Minister Jane Philpott: Ban seductive brand names as part of the federal government's plain packaging regulations for tobacco products

Montreal, February 6, 2017 — The **Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control** is applauding the **French government's** decision to ban various tobacco brand names and, bolstered by the support of 200 Quebec organizations, is asking Canada's **Minister of Health, Jane Philpott**, to include the same provisions in its regulations on plain and standardized tobacco packaging.

Under a national directive adopted last August¹, and following the implementation of plain packaging for all tobacco products, **France's Minister of Health Marisol Touraine** announced that she will refuse to give the green light² to the continued sale of certain cigarette and cigar products whose brand names have unacceptably positive connotations. These include "**Vogue**," "**Fine**," "**Allure**," "**Corset**," "**Café crème**," "**Paradiso**" and "**Punch**." Also banned from tobacco packaging are terms associated with slenderness (e.g., "**Slims**," "**Superslims**," "**Royale Super Slims Menthol**") or energy enhancement (e.g., "**Pall Mall Boost**"), or that suggest that the product is natural, organic (e.g., "**Allure Organic Superslim**") or biodegradable (e.g., "**Gauloise Biodégradable**").³ *"Some brand names will no longer be permitted, including those that are attractive or that suggest that smoking is chic, as this clearly goes against the spirit of plain packaging,"* said **Minister Touraine**⁴. [Our translation] (A transition period will allow manufacturers to continue selling cigarettes with these names for one more year and cigars with these names for two more years.)

After **Australia** introduced plain packaging in December 2012, manufacturers began changing their brand names by including the name of the color formerly associated with the brand, such as "**Marlboro Red**" and "**Marlboro Silver Fine Scent**."⁵ Unless Canada includes strong restrictions on brand names and other descriptive texts in its packaging regulations, one can also expect similar strategies to be deployed once plain packaging is adopted here.

France, an example to follow

For years, the health groups have condemned the fact that, despite bans on conventional advertising, the tobacco industry still manages to create "lifestyle" advertising, by using the cigarette pack as a promotional vehicle. Packs are enhanced with brand names and imagery, slogans and other terms such as "**Signature**," "**Distinct**," "**Balanced**," "**Mellow Blend**" and "**De Luxe**."⁶ The **Quebec Coalition** even lodged a complaint⁷ back in 2009 following the introduction of "**Vogue**" cigarettes in Canada.

"Using descriptive terms that have positive — and often seductive — connotations is a widespread tobacco industry marketing tactic. In addition, some terms found on packages continue to perpetuate false perceptions regarding relative risks among brands, perceptions that were previously created and fuelled by

the use of the terms 'light' and 'mild', terms that are currently explicitly prohibited," said **Flory Doucas, Co-Director and Spokesperson** for the **Quebec Coalition for Tobacco Control**, an anti-tobacco group founded in 1996. "It is therefore rather surprising that in its consultation document on the proposed regulations concerning plain packaging⁸, Health Canada did not include the option of further regulating brand names, beyond limiting the number of words they can contain that is."

Support across Quebec for plain packaging and restrictions on brand names

The **Coalition** today published a list of 200 groups from the health, municipal and educational sectors that are calling for a ban on "all promotional features on all tobacco packaging, including the use of colours, images, logos, slogans, distinctive fonts, and finishes." The groups are also requesting that the appearance of cigarettes be standardized to prohibit "the use of branding, logos, colours and special finishes, and establishing standards for cigarette length and diameter." Finally, they specified that "only the brand name would be permitted, and it too would be subject to restrictions."

"Restrictions on brand names could take several forms," explained **Flory Doucas, the Coalition's spokesperson**. "They could ban terms with positive connotations, as is the case in France and outlined in the *European Commission's Tobacco Products Directive*. The restrictions could also prohibit brand variants, as they do in Uruguay.⁹ Just as other jurisdictions have shown their leadership, Canada too needs to look for solutions to ban all promotional elements for a product that serves no purpose, creates a powerful addiction and ultimately kills the majority of its regular users," concluded **Doucas**.

Click here to see the [list of 200 Quebec organizations that endorsed plain and standardized packaging](#)¹⁰. The list includes the **City of Montreal**, **regional public health departments** from across the province, the **Quebec College of Family Physicians**, the **Quebec Order of Respiratory Therapists** and major charitable organizations involved in the fight against tobacco, including the **Quebec Lung Association**, the **Quebec Heart and Stroke Foundation**, and the **Quebec Division of the Canadian Cancer Society**.

For further information: Flory Doucas, Co-Director and Spokesperson; 514-598-5533; 514-515-6780 (cell)

References :

¹ **French Republic**, *Décret n° 2016-1117 du 11 août 2016*, article R. 3512-30, adopted on August 14, 2016, <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/decret/2016/8/11/AFSP1612356D/lo/texte> ; « In particular, are considered to be elements and devices that contribute to the promotion of a tobacco product » [our translation] elements listed in the EU Directive 2014/40/UE, « Article 13 – Product presentation », adopted on April 3, 2014, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32014L0040>

² **French Republic**, *Code général des impôts*, article 575 (adopted on January 26, 2016) : « The weighted average retail selling price shall be established for each group of products by 31 January of each year on the basis of the data for all releases made in the preceding calendar year by joint order of the Ministers responsible for Health and Budget. » [our translation] https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichCode.do?sessionId=9739BBCE548AFD3E46C602969DB7A25D.tpdila10v_2?idSectionTA=LEGISCTA000006179919&cidTexte=LEGITEXT000006069577&dateTexte=20170201

³ **Le Figaro**, « Cigarettes: les marques Vogue, Fine, Allure et Corset interdites », January 30/31, 2017. <http://www.lefigaro.fr/conso/2017/01/30/20010-20170130ARTF1G00114-cigarettes-l-interdiction-de-certaines-marques-se-rapproche.php>

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APPUIS DU QUÉBEC
À LA CAMPAGNE PANCANADIENNE EN FAVEUR DE L'EMBALLAGE NEUTRE ET STANDARDISÉ DES PRODUITS DU TABAC

Il est résolu que appuie que le Canada exige l'emballage neutre et standardisé des produits du tabac tel que décrit comme suit:

L'emballage neutre et standardisé interdirait tous les éléments promotionnels de tous les emballages de tabac, y compris l'utilisation de couleurs, d'images, de logos, de slogans, de polices de caractère distinctives et de fins. Seul le nom de la marque y serait autorisé et ce dernier sera lui aussi sujet à des restrictions. Les mises en garde de santé demeureraient présentes sur les emballages. La taille et la forme des emballages seraient standardisées, interdisant ainsi les formats spécifiques tels que les paquets de cigarettes minces et ultra minces, qui réduisent la taille des mises en garde et ciblent couramment les femmes. L'apparence des cigarettes serait également standardisée, pour entre autres y interdire l'utilisation d'images de marque, de logos, de couleurs et de fins spéciaux, et établir des normes sur la longueur et le diamètre des cigarettes.

Appuis québécois:

1. Alliance québécoise des thérapeutes naturels	15. Austin (Municipalité)
2. Amqui (Ville)	16. Auxerre-Nord (Municipalité)
3. Arundel (Canton)	17. Baie-Sauvé (Municipalité)
4. Association des dentistes de santé publique du Québec	18. Beaumont (Municipalité)
5. Association des chirurgiens dentistes du Québec	19. Bedford (Ville)
6. Association des chirurgiens vasculaires du Québec	20. Berry (Municipalité)
7. Association des gastroentérologues des établissements de santé et de services sociaux	21. Bois-de-Filion (Ville)
8. Association des médecins généralistes du Québec	22. Bois-Franc (Municipalité)
9. Association des pneumologues de la province de Québec	23. Brossard (Ville)
10. Association des spécialistes en médecine préventive du Québec	24. Capusa
11. Association d'asthmothérapie et de chirurgie cervico-faciale du Québec	25. Centre d'arrêt tabagique du ESSS Les Éclairs de l'Estrie
12. Association pour la santé publique du Québec	26. Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de services sociaux du Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean
13. Association pulmonaire du Québec	27. Centre universitaire de santé McGill
14. Aulais (Municipalité)	28. Centres de Femmes du Québec (Les)
	29. Chambard (Municipalité)
	30. Champneuf (Municipalité)
	31. Chapais (Ville)

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- ⁴ **French Minister for Health, Marisol Touraine**, quoted in *Journal international de médecine*, January 30, 2017. http://www.jim.fr/e-docs/quatre_marques_de_cigarettes_et_seize_mentions_specifiques_bientot_interdites_163512/document_actu_pro.phtml
- ⁵ **Scollo M, et al.** "Tobacco product developments coinciding with the implementation of plain packaging in Australia". *Tobacco Control* 2015;24:e116-e122, <http://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/content/24/e1/e116.long>
- ⁶ Some terms are listed on the website of **Imperial Tobacco Canada**, « Our brands », consulted on January 31, 2017. http://www.imperialtobaccocanada.com/groupca/sites/IMP_7VSH6J.nsf/vwPagesWebLive/DO7VVQQ4?opendocument
- ⁷ **Coalition québécoise pour le contrôle du tabac**, « Exploiter la mode pour vendre la mort : Une nouvelle marque de cigarette vise les femmes », October 28, 2009. http://www.cqct.qc.ca/Communiqués_docs/2009/PRSS_09_10_28_PlainteVogue.pdf
- ⁸ **Government of Canada**, « Consultation on "Plain and Standardized Packaging" for Tobacco Products », May 31, 2016. <http://healthycanadians.gc.ca/health-system-systeme-sante/consultations/tobacco-packages-emballages-produits-tabac/document-eng.php>
- ⁹ **International Tobacco Control Policy Evaluation Project**, « ITC Uruguay National Report », 2012. http://www.itcproject.org/files/ITC_Uruguay_NR-Aug8-web-v2.pdf
- ¹⁰ **Coalition québécoise pour le contrôle du tabac**, « Appuis du Québec à la campagne pancanadienne en faveur de l'emballage neutre et standardisé des produits du tabac », on January 13, 2017. http://cqct.qc.ca/Documents_docs/DOCU_2017/PROJ_17_01_13_Liste_Appui_Qc_Resolution_EmballageNeutre_200.pdf