



NEWS RELEASE

Geneva, 26th May

**HEART AND CANCER NGOs' COMBINE VOICES GLOBALLY
TO STOP SECOND-HAND SMOKE**

The World Heart Federation and the International Union Against Cancer, who together represent 460 member organisations in over 100 countries, are combining voices for **World No Tobacco Day, 31st May**, to stop second-hand smoke.

Non-smokers who regularly breathe second-hand smoke have a 25 per cent increased risk of developing both lung cancer and heart disease and an 80 per cent increased risk of suffering a stroke¹.

Men, women and children exposed to second-hand smoke involuntarily suffer from many of the diseases of active smoking, including lung cancer, strokes, heart attacks and other cardiovascular diseases.

"For the first time, the global cancer and heart disease NGOs have come together to jointly lobby governments to prioritise the introduction of tobacco control legislation, including smoke-free environments," said Janet Voûte, CEO, World Heart Federation. "Smokers who are employed in workplaces with smoking bans are likely to consume fewer cigarettes a day, are more likely to be considering quitting and quit at an increased rate compared with smokers employed in workplaces with no or weaker policies."²

Employees with colleagues who smoke and spouses and children living with smokers are the most vulnerable. It is estimated that 130 million non-smoking Chinese, three million British and 40 per cent of French employees are exposed to second-hand smoke in the workplace³ and 700 million children, almost half of all children worldwide live in a home of a smoker, constituting a substantial public health threat.

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Heart and Cancer NGOs/2

"We've come together to make one statement demonstrating our concern about each person's overall health and the numerous health risks incurred by people who are involuntarily exposed to second-hand smoke. We recommend that all governments adopt policies to protect the rights of non-smokers and establish in law the right to smoke-free environments," said Isabel Mortara, Executive Director of the International Union Against Cancer.

The two global NGOs are leading their 460 members in over 100 countries to lobby governments, health authorities and employers to rapidly introduce smoke-free measures, including smoke-free hospitals, workplaces, restaurants and public transport and to train health professionals to educate communities about the proven risks of second-hand smoke and the immediate health benefits to people who quit smoking.

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Editor's Notes

International Union Against Cancer

UICC is the only international non-governmental organisation that is dedicated solely to the global control of cancer. Its vision is of a world where cancer is eliminated as a major life-threatening disease for future generations. UICC unites the global cancer community bringing together 290 cancer-fighting organisations from 90 countries including advocacy groups, patient support networks, voluntary cancer societies, public health authorities, and research and treatment centres.

The World Heart Federation

The World Heart Federation is a Non Governmental Organisation based in Geneva and dedicated to the prevention and control of cardiovascular diseases around the world. The Federation is committed to helping the global population achieve a longer and better life through prevention and control of heart disease and stroke, with a particular focus on low and middle-income countries. The World Heart Federation is comprised of 168 member societies of cardiology and heart foundations from 98 countries and continental members covering the regions of Asia-Pacific, Europe, the Americas and Africa.

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Visit www.worldheart.org and www.uicc.org
<http://www.cwnewsroom.ch> for text and photos

¹ Hackshaw et al. The accumulated evidence on lung cancer and environmental tobacco smoke. *BMJ* 1997; 315:980-988 and Jiang He et al. Passive smoking and the risk of coronary heart disease – A meta-Analysis of epidemiologic studies. *1999,12,340:920-6* and Bonita et al. *Tobacco Control* 8: 156-160 (1999)

² Brownson RC et al. *Ann Rev Public Health* 2002.23: 333-48

³ World Bank, CDC, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1996