

# News Release

## British American Tobacco calls for tobacco harm reduction to be adopted as a progressive public health policy

29 May 2014

On World No Tobacco Day 2014, British American Tobacco is calling on the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Governments around the world to adopt a policy of tobacco harm reduction as a more progressive approach to tobacco regulation.

The WHO's own estimates suggest there are now one billion smokers across the globe and by 2050 this number could increase to 2.2billion.

Kingsley Wheaton, British American Tobacco's Director of Corporate & Regulatory Affairs, said: "For governments seeking to reduce tobacco use, we believe it's time for new, more progressive approaches to be considered. One such solution is to offer adult smokers a choice of substantially less risky products such as e-cigarettes.

"This approach is what many refer to as 'Tobacco Harm Reduction'. However, for this to work Governments and the public health community need to embrace this concept and the products that support it."

Recent media reports [1] suggest that less risky nicotine products such as e-cigarettes could be classified as tobacco products by the WHO. This could see governments eventually subjecting e-cigarettes to hefty excise duty, public smoking bans and severe marketing restrictions, all of which would hamper their growth and development.

Mr Wheaton continued: "If e-cigarettes are classified as tobacco products, then the associated regulatory hurdles will mean smokers will find it harder to access less risky alternatives - this can only be a bad thing for public health.

"We hope the arguments being made by the scientific community, the industry and public health campaigners will demonstrate the need for policy makers to carefully consider the benefits of tobacco harm reduction and give it their full support."

British American Tobacco invests approximately £170million per year in research and development which is enabling it to develop an expanding range of alternative tobacco and nicotine products including the launch of its first e-cigarette, Vype.

Mr Wheaton concluded: "We believe we can and should be a part of this debate and possible solutions, given our knowledge of consumers and our global reach.

"Tobacco harm reduction provides a progressive public health policy direction. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate on making this policy a global reality."

**ENDS**

[1] Financial Times – “WHO plans to regulate e-cigarettes in same way as normal tobacco” 13th April 2014

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

### **Animation**

An animated explanation of British American Tobacco’s views on tobacco harm reduction can be found at: [www.bat.com](http://www.bat.com) and on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/user/WelcomeToBAT](http://www.youtube.com/user/WelcomeToBAT) 

### **Sustainability Summary Report**

More information regarding our work into Tobacco Harm Reduction can be found in our Sustainability Summary Report. To download a copy, please visit: [www.bat.com/sr2013](http://www.bat.com/sr2013) 

The report is also available for iPad and Android tablets and the app can be downloaded free of charge from [iTunes](#)  or [Google Play](#) .

### **Enquiries**

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