Tobacco Advertising Ban Approved

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On 12 February the Council of the European Union reached an agreement on the phased reduction of tobacco advertising over the next eight years. The agreement, on the directive aiming at a tobacco advertising ban is due to come into force during 1999, after approval by the European Parliament.

The agreed text foresees in the phasing-out of the most part of direct tobacco advertising in three to four years from the approval, while indirect advertising (i.e. by way of sponsorship/merchandising of other products, and/or events) is due to be eliminated within a period of six years and anyway before October 2006. Exempted from the ban are magazines from outside the European Union and publications aimed at the tobacco-industry itself.

The agreement has been strongly criticized by the Confederation of European Community Cigarette Manufacturers (CECCM) which announced its intention to challenge the legal basis of the directive. A political agreement on this subject had already been agreed upon on in December of last year.

2067th Council meeting Research, Brussels, 12 February 1998. DN: PRES/98/26

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