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## DOUALA MEDIA DIALOGUE – 31 May 2017

### ACTIVITY REPORT

#### Introduction

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of May every year, tobacco control advocates around the world come together to commemorate World No Tobacco Day. In Cameroon, up to 2,700 people die as a result of tobacco consumption. According to the 2013 Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) carried out in Cameroon, approximately 1,100,000 adults are regular consumers of tobacco products in the country. The 2014 Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) meanwhile, discloses that at least 300,000 students between the ages of 13 and 15 consume tobacco products. What's more striking is the fact that tobacco is known to kill at least half of all its consumers.

With such disturbing data, the need to speak out on the dangers of tobacco consumption, and more importantly, adopt regulations that will control the production and consumption of tobacco products in Cameroon increasingly becomes evident.

As part of activities to commemorate World No Tobacco Day, and in a bid to sensitize Cameroonians on the dangers of tobacco consumption and examine strategies that can be exploited by the media to lure decision makers to speed up action on their responsibility to protect citizens from the dangers of tobacco, the Cameroonian Coalition for Tobacco Control (C3T) organised a Media Dialogue in Douala on Wednesday the 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2017. This report highlights that activity.

#### THE MEDIA DIALOGUE

The Media Dialogue took place at the *Cercle Municipal de Bonanjo* in Douala. It primarily focused on getting journalists exchange ideas on the dangers of tobacco consumption, and the importance of adopting a comprehensive ban on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship (especially targeted at youths), as well as the importance of telling the truth hidden in current cigarette packages by adopting graphic health warning labels on packs of tobacco products. The journalists also exchanged ideas on the benefits of having a smoke free Cameroon. All these discussion were linked to the theme of World No Tobacco Day 2017 which is “**Tobacco: A Threat To Development**”.

The following issues were discussed during the press talk;

- The general tobacco situation in Cameroon.
  - ✓ The 2014 GYTS Cameroon
  - ✓ The 2013 GATS Cameroon
- Tobacco and its health, economic, social and environmental consequences.

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- Actions and Interference of the tobacco industry.
  - ✓ The Tobacco Industry Accountability Project (TIA): A flagship study carried out in April 2016 by C3T in collaboration with the African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA). The study observed 20 schools in Yaoundé and identified that the tobacco industry effectively targets schools in its advertising, promotion and sponsorship activities.

The FCTC: Components of a good tobacco control law

- ✓ A comprehensive ban on Tobacco Advertising Promotion and Sponsorship.
- ✓ Graphic Health Warnings on Packs of Tobacco Products
- ✓ Smoke-free environments
- ✓ Taxation

During the discussions, the journalists had the following questions;

- I. Why do tobacco products continue to be manufactured in Cameroon and imported to the country if they are this dangerous?
- II. What is the coalition doing to pass on sensitisation messages in remote areas?
- III. What is the status of the tobacco control law in Cameroon?
- IV. Why focus on the media when other important stakeholders exist.

At the end of the exchanges, the journalists showed quite some interest to the different subjects. Several press articles, radio and TV programs as well as newspaper and online media reports dealt with the topics addressed during this media dialogue.

### **Attendance**

The Douala media dialogue was attended by 59 journalists from 35 media organs. The media organs that answered present include;

### **Television Stations**

1. CRTV (Littoral Service)
2. STV
3. Vision 4
4. Canal 2 International
5. DBS TV
6. LTM TV
7. Equinoxe TV

### **Radio Stations**

1. CRTV (Littoral Service)
2. FM 105
3. Sweet FM

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4. Mediafrique Radio
5. Dynamic FM
6. Radio Campus
7. Balafon Radio
8. Miango FM
9. Equinoxe Radio
10. Radio GBN
11. Pena Mundi FM
12. Cauris FM

#### Written Press

1. Horizon Santé
2. Mutations
3. Horizon Plus
4. Generation Libre
5. Le Corbeau
6. Le Jeune Enqueteur
7. La Nouvelle Expression
8. Reperes
9. Cameroon Tribune
10. Aurore
11. Patrimoine d'Afrique
12. L'Info
13. The Scoop

#### Online Press

1. lavoixdukoat.com
2. cameroonnewsagency.com
3. camerouninfo.net

#### Conclusion

A good number of the journalists were apparently not very knowledgeable on tobacco control issues. With this media dialogue and with the interest many of the journalists seemed to show on the subject, we just might have a lot more media attention on tobacco related issues in Douala. It is the greatest wish of C3T that this happens, and the coalition encourages media practitioners nationwide to take interest on tobacco control activities in Cameroon.

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## THE MEDIA DIALOGUE IN IMAGES



**Coalition Camerounaise Contre le Tabac (C3T)**

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