



## **JTI Ireland calls for ‘plain’ packaging Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) to be published**

**Dublin, 10 June, 2014** – JTI Ireland has today called on the Minister for Health to urgently publish the findings of the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) on ‘plain’ packaging of tobacco products. Given the widespread negative consequences expected if legislation is implemented, the RIA must review in detail the consequences, costs and benefits of the proposal.

*“Plain’ packaging is not as simple as it sounds, and that is why it is vital that we see what evidence the Government has for introducing it here in Ireland!”* - states John Freda, General Manager of JTI Ireland.

*“Not only will ‘plain’ packaging have significant negative impact on business and Ireland’s reputation internationally as a protectorate of intellectual property rights, there is absolutely no credible evidence to suggest the measure will actually work and help reduce consumption amongst minors, or lead to any actual health benefits.”* – says Mr. Freda.

18 months following the introduction of ‘plain’ packaging in Australia, there is still no official Government assessment to say that it has reduced smoking rates. Australia will in fact conduct an official impact assessment on the measure in December 2014, *“Given all we know about the negative impacts of ‘plain’ packaging in Australia, the Irish Government should wait until there is credible evidence, which currently doesn’t exist. This is a reasonable expectation for an unproven concept.”* - says Mr. Freda.

Australia has seen an increase in the illegal trade of tobacco products since ‘plain’ packaging was introduced. *“Plain’ packaging will only serve the interests of criminal gangs, as it has in Australia”,* stresses Mr. Freda. Ireland has one of the highest rates of non-duty paid tobacco consumption in Europe. The illegal trade in tobacco already costs the Exchequer €250 million annually, and the Government’s proposal to introduce ‘plain’ packaging will not achieve the aim of reducing smoking initiation. *“Rather, it will increase children’s access to tobacco products as cigarettes are at least 50% cheaper on the streets than the ones sold by legitimate retailers.”* - adds Mr. Freda

Furthermore, the Australian ‘plain’ packaging legislation is currently the subject of challenges at the World Trade Organization (WTO). If the Australian plain packaging legislation is found to be

incompatible with the WTO obligations, Australia must amend its legislation or face possible sanctions, including trade-based retaliation. A final ruling is expected in the first quarter of 2015. *“There are significant international developments such as the impact assessment being conducted in Australia in December and the decision expected at the World Trade Organisation next year, which should be analysed by Government before making any decisions to proceed.”* - states Mr. Freda.

Finally, plain packaging would be an unjustified attack on the rights of brand owners. *“If implemented it would deprive us of our property, removing our ability to differentiate our products from those of our competitors. Therefore, we are currently considering all our options regarding a future legal challenge if ‘plain’ packaging legislation is enacted.”* - Mr. Freda concluded.

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For more information visit  
**theplainfacts.ie**

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**About JTI**

JTI Ireland Ltd, a member of the Japan Tobacco Group of Companies, is Ireland’s leading tobacco manufacturer. It markets brands such as Benson & Hedges, Silk Cut, Camel and Amber Leaf. JTI Ireland supplies over 4,000 retail outlets nationwide and employs more than 100 people locally. JTI acquired Gallaher in 2007. Gallaher had been manufacturing tobacco products in Ireland since 1964. For more information, visit [www.jti.com](http://www.jti.com)