

Zim: Tobacco firm calls for sensible regulations

British American Tobacco Zimbabwe (BAT) has announced that it has raised the bar in appropriate marketing of its cigarette brands, but called on regulators to ensure sensible and proportionate regulations based on scientific evidence.

By [Dumisani Ndlela](#) 27 Aug 2010

Health and Child Welfare Minister Henry Madzorere said in May that he would push for punitive levies on alcohol and tobacco advertisement in order to curb consumption.

He said government wanted images of damaged lungs on tobacco adverts to accompany the traditional "smoking may be hazardous to your health" messages in order to reinforce the impact of smoking on health.

Based on scientific evidence

In an announcement on Wednesday, 25 August, BAT said it was mindful of the worldwide move towards tobacco control but said regulation should be sensible, proportionate and based on scientific evidence.

"Likewise, we believe that regulation should ensure that adult consumers can continue to make informed choices about a legal product, thus accommodate the interests of both smokers and non-smokers," said BAT Zimbabwe, which is part of an international conglomerate.

It said smoking should be only for adults who understood the risks and BAT supported regulations limiting non-smokers involuntary exposure.

Appropriate marketing

"We favour restrictions on smoking in enclosed public places and support practical initiatives such as the creation of smoke-free areas, combined with adequate provision for smokers".

"We strongly believe that children should not smoke and that tobacco products should never be marketed to minors," said BAT.

The company said it had adopted appropriate marketing ensuring consumer packaging and any advertising carried clearly visible health warnings and was compliant with all domestic laws and industry marketing codes.

"We have now updated the standards to include more restrictions and more adult age verification procedures. We believe this will help us to further raise the bar in appropriate marketing," said the company.

ABOUT DUMISANI NDLELA

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