**S&D Group will not back extension of agreement with Philip Morris on illicit tobacco**

**Original Script Date:** March 9, 2016

**Script Version:** March 9, 2016

**Locations:** European Parliament, Strasbourg, France

**Dates Shot:** March 9, 2016

**Sound:** natural with English speech, natural with French speech

**Duration:**  02:35

**Source:** S&D group

**Restriction:** none

**Intro**

*Strasbourg, 9th of March.* The S&D Group in the European Parliament is against the extension of an agreement with Philip Morris that was designed to help tackle smuggling and fraud of branded cigarettes.  The Group believes that although the agreement has been useful, changes in the market and regulatory environment mean it is no longer the best means to continue the fight against illicit tobacco. S&D's position was backed today by a large majority in the European Parliament.

**This broadcast-quality video package contains 1 B-Roll video and stockshots.**

**The package in details:**

* Interview with S&D Member, Gilles Pargneaux
* Interview with S&D Spokesperson on budget control, Inés Ayala Sender
* Stockshots of Philip Morris products

**Shotlist**

FRANCE, STRASBOURG (MARCH 09, 2016) (SOCIALISTS AND DEMOCRATS, EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT - ACCESS ALL)

1. CUTAWAY: VARIOUS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT IN STRASBOURG (EXTERIOR)
2. CUTAWAY: VARIOUS OF THE VOTE RELATED TO PHILIP MORRIS INTERNATIONAL
3. GILLES PARGNEAUX (S&D MEP, FR) SAYING (FRENCH):

EN: “We voted in favour of the resolution. A large majority in the European Parliament backed it and voted not to renew the agreement with Philip Morris. “

FR: « On a voté pour la résolution et très majoritairement, le parlement européen a souhaité cette résolution pour ne pas renouveler l’accord avec Philip Morris ».

1. CUTAWAY: GILLES PARGNEAUX TALKING TO A JOURNALIST
2. GILLES PARGNEAUX (S&D MEP, FR) SAYING (FRENCH):

EN: “Because this is a fool’s bargain. Philip Morris has given €1,250,000 to the European Union and EU member states over the last 12 years to fight against tobacco smuggling. But we noticed that during these 12 years, the cigarettes produced by tobacco companies and by others were still rising. That created a loss of revenues of around €12 billion  for the European Union.”

FR: « Parce que c’est un marché de dupe. Philip Morris donne de l’argent à l’union européenne et aux états membres à hauteur d’ 1 250 000€ pour douze ans pour lutter contre la contrebande des cigarettes. Or, on s’est aperçu que pendant ces douze ans, les cigarettes fabriquées ou par des cigarettiers ou en dehors d’eux, ont continué à augmenter. Cela crée un manque à gagner d’environ 12 milliards d’€ par an pour l’union européenne ».

1. CUTAWAY: INES AYALA SENDER TALKING TO A JOURNALIST
2. INES AYALA SENDER (S&D MEP, ES) SAYING (ENGLISH):

"We prefer to reinforce the Tobacco Directive which gives us the right tools to fight against smuggling and illicit tobacco products. So we think that it is better to pressure EU member states to apply the directive as soon as possible because it will be compulsory from June this year."”

1. CUTAWAY: INES AYALA SENDER TALKING TO A JOURNALIST
2. INES AYALA SENDER (S&D MEP, ES) SAYING (ENGLISH):

“We will also ask the Commission to fill the possible legal gap between 2016 and 2019, before the directive enters fully into force, with specific measures to prevent any risks."

1. CUTAWAY: INES AYALA SENDER TALKING TO A JOURNALIST

**Story**

The S&D Group in the European Parliament is against the extension of an agreement with Philip Morris that was designed to help tackle smuggling and fraud of branded cigarettes.  The Group believes that although the agreement has been useful, changes in the market and regulatory environment mean it is no longer the best means to continue the fight against illicit tobacco.

**Inés Ayala Sender MEP and S&D Group spokesperson for budget control, said:**

"The agreement with Philip Morris was innovative and a useful tool in the fight against the smuggling of cigarettes when it was first introduced. However, this agreement has run its course and we are opposed to its renewal or extension.  Changes in the market and regulatory environment mean that the agreement is no longer the best tool to fight bootlegging or smuggling of tobacco products.

"The biggest challenges we now face in the fight against illicit tobacco is not bootlegged brand cigarettes but unmarked cigarettes that are sold cheaply on the black market, known as 'cheap-whites'. The deal with Philip Morris cannot help in the fight against these and this is why we request the Commission to come forward urgently with an action plan to tackle this problem.

"The development of new regulatory tools also makes the extension unnecessary - with the Tobacco Products Directive and the WHO protocol on tobacco control coming into force in the near future. However, before these are fully operational, we call on the Commission to put forward temporary measures in order to ensure there is no gap between the end of this agreement and new rules coming into force."