

Bentoel Group calls for sensible regulation for alternative tobacco products on World Vape Day

- Bentoel Group, a leading multi-category company in Indonesia, calls for a regulatory framework that encourages adult smokers to switch to smokeless alternatives
- Studies suggest a significant reduction in premature deaths could be achieved if smokers switched exclusively to smokeless alternatives like vaping¹

30 May 2024, Jakarta - On World Vape Day, Bentoel Group is calling for the implementation of sensible regulation for smokeless nicotine and tobacco products, such as vapour products, to allow consumers to access options of less risky alternatives.

Based on the latest Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS), in 2021 the smoking prevalence among adults in Indonesia was 1.6%, marking a decrease from 1.8% in the previous year. However, with the Government's ambition to further reduce smoking prevalence, more must be done to achieve this goal.

More than 1 billion people globally continue to smoke despite the serious risks. According to population modelling studies, a significant reduction in premature deaths could be achieved if smokers switched exclusively to reduced-risk* alternatives².

To capitalise on the public health potential offered by smokeless products, appropriate regulation is required to encourage adult smokers to switch, protect consumers with stringent safety standards and prevent underage access and use.

Bentoel Group has set out four principles that should be applied for effective and impactful regulation relating to smokeless tobacco and nicotine products:

- 1. Access to consumer relevant products:** regulations should also allow a wide range of smokeless alternatives to ensure that consumers can access these alternatives and make informed choices about switching based on the best available scientific evidence.
- 2. Adult-only Consumer:** the use and sale of smokeless tobacco and nicotine products by and to the underage should be prohibited by law.
- 3. Product Quality and Safety:** robust and properly enforced quality and safety standards should be at the heart of regulation, to protect consumers.
- 4. Robust Enforcement:** Regulation should provide enforcement authorities with the necessary powers to apply penalties and sanctions to those who fail to comply with regulations, particularly those who supply non-compliant products and provide product to those who are underage.

Dian Widyanarti, Head of Regulatory & External Affairs Bentoel Group, said: "The migration of smokers to these alternatives is crucial both for countries looking to reduce their smoking rates and for global public health more broadly. Whether or not governments are able to take

¹ Evidence From the Scientific Assessment of Electronic Cigarettes Role in Tobacco Harm Reduction, Oscar M. Camacho et al, Contributions to Tobacco & Nicotine Research, Volume 30 (2021), Issue 2 (May 2021), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/cttr-2021-0007>

advantage of these products and maximise their harm reduction potential depends as much on the implementation of sensible, risk-proportionate regulation as it does on changes in consumer behaviour.”

Countries that have implemented regulation that recognises the harm reduction potential of smokeless products and support their use for adult smokers have experienced a rapid decline in smoking. The UK, US and Japan are all reporting their lowest smoking rates on record, while Sweden is on track to declaring itself smokefree this year, 16 years ahead of the 2040 EU target. This is largely a result of widespread awareness, availability and usage of smokeless alternatives, such as vapour products, heated products and nicotine pouches.

Dr James Murphy, Group Director of Research & Science, BAT, said: “There are widespread misconceptions about the risk of smokeless products compared to smoking. This discourages many smokers who don’t quit smoking from switching. The science is clear: well-stewarded smokeless tobacco and nicotine products have a considerably lower-risk profile than smoking. It’s the toxicants released by the burning of tobacco causes the harm associated with smoking.”

BAT’s purpose is to create A Better Tomorrow™ by Building a Smokeless World. This commitment is demonstrated by the ambition to generate 50% of revenue globally from non-combustible products by 2035.

BAT invests more than £300m a year in the development of smokeless tobacco and nicotine products which are sold 75+ markets globally.

** Based on the weight of evidence and assuming a complete switch from cigarette smoking. These products are not risk free and are addictive.*

ENDS

