



ATCA Congratulates Nigeria For Historic Measures Regulating Tobacco and Tobacco Products in the Entertainment Media

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For immediate release

Lome, 27 May 2024 - The African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) congratulates the government and people of Nigeria for its historic new measures prohibiting the promotion and glamorisation of tobacco and tobacco products in its film and music industry.

ATCA notes that the regulation, announced by the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board (NFVCB) on May 21, 2024, is the first of its kind in Africa and the second in the world after India. It is also in line with new measures to address cross-border tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship and the depiction of tobacco in entertainment media adopted by the Parties to the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) in Panama city in February 2024.

We endorse the guidelines titled "Prohibition of Money Ritual, Ritual Killing, Tobacco, Tobacco Product, Nicotine Product Promotion, Glamorization, Display in Movies, Musical Videos and Skits" Regulations 2024, noting that it is the culmination of years of the #Smoke-Free Nollywood campaign by local tobacco control advocates.

According to the NFVCB, films depicting tobacco or nicotine use must henceforth display health warning labels on screen at the beginning and end of films, in addition to warnings that will appear on screen during scenes depicting tobacco or nicotine use. Additionally, tobacco and nicotine brands are now prohibited from being displayed on screen or marketing in films. The regulation covers movies, music videos and skits produced in Nollywood – one of the world's biggest movie industries – and prohibit tobacco advertising at movie premieres and screenings.

We believe that these measures send a clear message about Nigeria's determination to prevent the tobacco and allied industry from using Nollywood and the burgeoning Nigerian music industry, as tools to ensnare new victims for its products of death and disease.

Given the global popularity of Nigerian musics and films, we are optimistic that when fully adopted and enforced, the regulation will stamp out one of the most enduring ways tobacco companies target young people across the continent and its Diaspora and much of the rest of the world.

Once again, ATCA thanks the government of Nigeria for charting a path for the rest of the continent to follow. We congratulate civil society groups, and stakeholders in the entertainment industry for their contribution to this great progress. Through this regulation, Nigeria has joined the global effort to halt smoking in movies and has shown an essential path to the rest of the continent to save the future generation from a devastating scourge. We call on other Parties in the WHO Afro region to act quickly and emulate Nigeria.

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The African Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA) is a non-profit, non-political, Pan-African network of civil society organizations headquartered in Lome, Togo. With members in 39 countries, ATCA is dedicated to promoting public health and curbing the tobacco epidemic in the continent. The alliance is an Observer to the WHO FCTC Conference of Parties and Meeting of Parties to the protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products. It has a Special Consultative Status with the UN ECOSOC, and is accredited as a regional non-state actor (NSA) with WHO AFRO.