



2012-10-12

Mrs. Catherine Day
Secretary General, European Commission
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium

Copy to:
Mr. Johannes Laitenberger, Head of Cabinet, European Commission

Dear Secretary General,

We represent Swedish Match AB, the world's leading manufacturer of traditional Swedish snus, based in Stockholm, Sweden. Swedish snus is a traditional Scandinavian smokeless tobacco product, intended neither to be smoked nor chewed. It is therefore not allowed to be sold on our internal market (art.8, 2001/37/EC).

Numerous stakeholders, including consumers, parliamentarians, the Swedish government, tobacco control advocates and scientists, have repeatedly raised their views with DG Sanco: that traditional Swedish snus is the subject of unwarranted discrimination under current legislation; that it is the least harmful of all the legal tobacco products currently being sold within the EU; and that the ultimate market intervention – a complete ban – is denying cigarette smokers access to a traditional and viable alternative to smoking. Snus is the most commonly-used smoking cessation aid in Sweden, which in turn explains the record-low smoking rates among Swedish men. The positive consequences of that fact are reflected in public health statistics.

Following repeated submissions made by the above stakeholders, we have serious concerns about the process being followed in revising the current Tobacco Products Directive, especially the potential violation of fundamental internal market principles. It would also seem that the Commission has never assessed Swedish snus on its relative risks or on its own merits. In addition, and based on our own correspondence and meetings with DG Sanco along with their public statements, we believe that Swedish snus is intentionally not being given a fair trial, while the science that has been produced after 2001 is being systematically and consciously ignored.

We realize that tobacco is controversial, and that the much-needed regulation of this category is therefore politicized. That should, however, never be an excuse for disregarding facts, scientific evidence or the principles of our internal market.

With these concerns in mind, we would highly appreciate a meeting with you in the very near future. Our hope and objective is to clarify some issues regarding the review of the Tobacco Products Directive in general and the process for Swedish snus in particular. We would also like an opportunity to share with you our view on an alternative to a complete ban that would better rhyme with the principles of the internal market without sacrificing the protection of consumers.

Yours sincerely,

Fredrik Peyron

General Counsel & Secretary to the Board of Directors
Swedish Match AB