Dear [Name],[

Thank you for your letter, which received my full attention. In order to have these exchanges in full transparency, I would like to suggest that “A Non Smoking Generation” sign-ups in the EU transparency register and discloses its purpose, activity and financing.

As announced in the Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan, the Commission proposed a “Tobacco-free Generation”, where less than 5% of the population uses tobacco by 2040, compared to around 25% today. Nowadays, tobacco control policies face a much more complex product landscape than previously due to emerging products and innovations with and without tobacco and/or nicotine. These pose a risk to the public health achievements of the EU, attained through political and regulatory efforts. To also address emerging tobacco and related products, the plan focuses on several tobacco control actions, including the revision of the Tobacco Taxation Directive and the Tobacco Products Directive, but also support to Member States in the implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

The Commission is working to understand the health implications of the various products that have more recently been placed in the EU market. To this purpose, it relies on independent scientific assessments such as the Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks (SCHER) opinion on electronic cigarettes, which will support the Commission’s risk management decisions on e-cigarettes. This opinion will also help to assess the potential need for legislative amendments to the Directive or other regulatory/enforcement measures.

Concerning oral “tobacco-free” nicotine pouches, the Commission is aware of the regulatory challenges these products pose as confirmed by the recent Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the application of Directive 2014/40/EU concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco and related products (COM/2021/249 final). The report specifies that the Directive does not fully capture certain emerging products not containing tobacco and that legal loopholes related to chewing bags and emerging nicotine pouches became apparent. The same report also addresses novel tobacco products, such as Heated Tobacco Products (HTPs), emphasising the need to monitor these products closely as they pose specific regulatory challenges, including health warnings, use of flavours and interaction with devices.

The report, along with feedback on its findings, will feed into the upcoming evaluation and impact assessment process, which must precede any change of legislation, including the revision of the Tobacco Products Directive. We encourage you to keep working towards ending the tobacco and nicotine epidemic. The only true way out of this epidemic is to deal with the root cause: nicotine dependence. The best is not to start the use these products and, once started, to put an end to tobacco and/or nicotine consumption.

Sincerely,

Stella Kyriakides