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WHO STUDY GROUP ON TOBACCO PRODUCT REGULATION

Report on the Scientific Basis of Tobacco Product Regulation: Third Report of a WHO Study Group

World Health Organization

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1. Introduction

The fifth meeting of the WHO Study Group on Tobacco Product Regulation (TobReg) was held in Durban, South Africa on 12–14 November 2008. TobReg is mandated to provide the WHO Director-General with scientifically sound, evidence-based recommendations to Member States about tobacco product regulation. In line with the provisions of Articles 9 and 10 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, TobReg identifies approaches for regulating tobacco products that pose significant public health issues and raise questions for tobacco control policy.

At its fifth meeting, the Study Group addressed regulation of electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco toxicants, 'roll-your-own' products, products marketed as cessation aids, particles in smoke and menthol. The meeting followed a WHO press release on 19 September 2008, which asserted that WHO does not consider electronic cigarettes to be a legitimate tobacco cessation therapy. The press release stressed that, as no rigorous, peer-reviewed studies have been conducted to show that electronic cigarettes are a safe, effective nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), there is no evidence to support marketing of these products for tobacco cessation.

This report presents the conclusions and recommendations of the Study Group at its fifth meeting on two products, both of which represent potential harm to public health and the promotion, sale and use of which are inade-