



THE TOBACCO INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Fong Kong Smokes a Regional Problem

In a bold move against smuggling and counterfeiting, Mozambican Customs officials will on Friday 2 March 2012, destroy over 400,000 illegal cigarettes. The “Pacific Blue” and “Kingdom” cigarettes were seized at a farm in the Manica Province. Upon further inspection, authorities discovered that the cigarette packs did not carry the relevant Mozambican Portuguese health warnings. Neither of the seized brands is sold in the country and it is suspected that the cigarettes were en-route to another market within the Southern African Region.

Francois van der Merwe, CEO and Chairman of the Tobacco Institute of Southern Africa (TISA) commended authorities on their swift action against cigarette smugglers. “Around 80% of the illegal cigarettes coming into South Africa are from Zimbabwe. Unscrupulous smugglers and counterfeiters have broadened their routes to be able to smuggle illegal cigarettes into the market. These products, unfortunately often end up in the South African market, contributing to the almost R4-billion loss in Government revenue annually,” Mr van der Merwe added.

TISA recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the smuggling and counterfeiting of tobacco products in the Southern African Region with the Mozambique Revenue Authority – a milestone in what has become a regional fight against illicit trade. “This destruction is evidence of the integrated effort from law enforcement authorities in the region to shut down the supply chain of smugglers and counterfeiters in the Southern African Region. We believe that partnerships such as this are the only way to successfully combat the illicit trade in tobacco products in the Region,” Mr van der Merwe said.

Note to Editors:

The Tobacco Institute of Southern Africa (TISA) is the industry body of the tobacco industry in South Africa. TISA represents the entire value chain of the legitimate industry including tobacco farmers, leaf processors, leaf dealers, manufacturers, importers and exporters of tobacco products. TISA's mandate and reach also extends into the SACU and SADC regions.

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