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**CIRCULAR**From the Prime Ministry:**Subject:** The National Tobacco Control Program

Plan of Action (2015-2018)

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In addition to the development in the field of health, the development of economic and technological resources increases the quality of life for individuals and extends their life span. In this context, it is crucial to place more importance on protective and preventive health in order for health services to be presented with better quality and a more efficient manner.

The use of tobacco is one of the leading causes of non-infectious diseases and decreasing tobacco use enables us to eliminate many illnesses. In this context, the sections concerning health in the Tenth Development Plan (2014-2018) include “combating tobacco use”, which is considered among the programs and action plans for healthy life and the increase of interaction in the development and application of these programs is emphasized.

In the program concerning health in the Development Plan it is demanded that “programs be developed and inspections be made more efficient in the scope of combating tobacco use” and the task of coordinating these activities has been assigned to the Ministry of Health.

In order to achieve the goals that have been set on the subject of “combating tobacco use” in the Development Plan, the “National Tobacco Control Program Plan of Action (2015-2018)”, prepared with the participation of relevant institutions under the coordination of the Ministry of Health, will be put into application upon its publication. The Action Plan will be sent to the relevant institutions by the Ministry of Health and it will be broadcasted on the Ministry’s website.

It has been deemed suitable for a “National Tobacco Control Coordination Committee” to be formed under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Health to monitor the Action Plan, assess results, change and update as necessary and to prepare, approve and put into application new strategies, programs and action plans as needed.

The Committee has been formed to be under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Health or the Turkish Public Health Organization Chairman with the participation of sufficient representatives from the senior level administrations of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Ministry of the Economy, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Customs and Trade, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Transportation, Maritime and Communication, the Turkish Statistics Institution, the Alcohol and Tobacco Markets Regulation Board, the Superior Council of Radio and Television and the Higher Education Board, representatives from other organizations relevant to the subject to be determined by the Ministry of Health and non-governmental organizations.

The committee will meet once every six months or within one week at the latest by request of the chairman or other members. The secretarial services of the committee and the monitoring and coordination of the decisions made by the committee being put into application by the relevant institutions will be carried out by the Turkish Public Health Institution.

The Committee may, if deemed necessary, invite representatives of other ministries, public agencies and institutions, universities, professional organizations, media, non-governmental organizations and sector representatives to participate in the meetings. If needed by the Committee, it will be possible to form sub-committees, consultation groups and temporary or permanent task groups.

Various duties and responsibilities have been assigned to different organizations and institutions in the Action Plan. All information that may be needed on the duties that need to be carried out and the process of putting the action plan into practice will be provided by the Ministry of Health; cooperation and coordination meetings will be organized and monitored closely.

I request with urgency that all ministries and public organizations and institutions provide all manner of contributions and support that may be needed in the application of the decisions made by the Committee and the Program and Action Plan, taking into consideration the applications of our country on tobacco control which have been presented as an example all over the world; and that all duties and responsibilities that are undertaken by institutions within this scope be carried out with the utmost care.

Ahmet DAVUTOĞLU

Prime Minister