

10 June 2025

# Agenda

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**9:30 Arrival and registration****10:10 Technology and Innovation: Driving forces behind global solutions**

- Tommaso Di Giovanni (Vice President, Communications and Engagement, PMI)

Innovation has the power to tackle global challenges and, when paired with policy changes, can drive meaningful solutions to worldwide issues. However, skepticism towards innovation often results in missed opportunities and stalls progress.

**10:35 Harnessing Collective Action for a Smoke-Free Future in Africa**

- Branislav Bibic (Area Vice President Sub-Saharan Africa, PMI)

Achieving PMI's vision of a smoke-free future hinges on the power of collective action and shared purpose. This keynote will highlight the crucial role of collaboration among stakeholders, governments, communities, and consumers in driving meaningful change. Through compelling real-life examples and insights, we will learn how science, technology, and innovation can transform lives—when bolstered by inclusive partnerships and a unified commitment to progress for Africa.

**10:55 A Tale of Two Strategies: Adoption vs. Resistance to Smoke-Free Innovations**

- Andrea Gontkovicova (Vice President Corporate Affairs, SSEA, CIS & MEA, PMI)

A growing number of forward-thinking governments are recognizing that scientifically substantiated less harmful alternatives to smoking can play a role in accelerating the decline of smoking. These efforts are yielding positive results, generating public health and socio-economic benefits.

**11:15 Towards Smarter Regulation: Ensuring Innovation, Scientific Rigor, and Community Engagement in Africa's Policy Landscape**

- Tommaso Di Giovanni (Vice President, Communications and Engagement, PMI)
- Branislav Bibic (Area Vice President Sub-Saharan Africa, PMI)
- Andrea Gontkovicova (Vice President Corporate Affairs, SSEA, CIS & MEA, PMI)
- Themba Mathebula (Director External Affairs Southern Africa, PMI)

Moderator: Oliver Dickson (Broadcaster, SABC NEWS)

When Science Is Ignored and Innovation Stifled, Public Health Suffers: Differentiation Matters for Smokers

This panel will critically explore South Africa's proposed Tobacco Products and Electronic Delivery Systems Control Bill and the NEDLAC process as a practical case study for Africa. It will examine whether the policy path respects democratic engagement, scientific evidence, and public health goals—while asking hard questions about stakeholder inclusion, constitutionality, prohibition and harm reduction.

**12:00 Lunch**

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**13:15 Smoke-Free Success: Ensuring Accurate Information for Consumers**

- Jonathan Kwak (Smoke-Free Products Director South Africa, PMI)

The increasing number of users of PMI smoke-free products indicates a growing demand for better alternatives to cigarettes, as evidenced by the commercial success of IQOS and ZYN. However, consumers need accurate and non-misleading information about smoke-free products to make informed choices.

**13:40 Scientific Advancements in Smoke-Free Products: Building Trust and Public Awareness**

- Buhle Binta (Head of Scientific Engagement Sub-Saharan Africa, PMI)
- Clement Diarga Basse (Scientific Engagement Manager Sub-Saharan Africa, PMI)

Scientific evidence that these products are better than continued smoking is widespread and difficult to dispute. While the scientific case for tobacco harm reduction becomes more robust annually, skepticism around smoke-free products are getting in the way of helping smokers make informed choices that are better for their health.

**14:10 Coffee Break****14:25 Tobacco Harm Reduction: Amplifying Voices for Change**

- Yael Ossowski (Deputy Director, Consumer Choice Center)
- Dr Mercy Korir (Chief Executive Officer & Editor-in-Chief, Willow Health Media)
- Dr Esthras Tlou Moloko (Medical Practitioner, Numolux Group, Former Special Advisor to the Minister of Health, South Africa)

Moderator: Oliver Dickson (Broadcaster, SABC NEWS)

Consumers must be heard in tobacco harm reduction discussions. Featuring advocates, public health experts, and consumer representatives, this panel will discuss the threat of misinformation, the courage to act on scientific evidence, and the need for policies that educate and empower consumers.

**15:25 Closing Remarks**

- Tommaso Di Giovanni (Vice President, Communications and Engagement, PMI)

**15:30 Exhibition Area Tour | Interviews**

- Smoke-free products expo: Consumers' retail experience
- Facts vs. myths about smoke-free products: A virtual-reality experience
- Scientific evidence of smoke-free products: Science demo machine

**17:00 Networking Reception (Restaurant Thirty Seven, Westin Hotel)**