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## WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on cancer and primary prevention

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Lapse date: 5.1.2016

**Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on cancer and primary prevention<sup>1</sup>**

1. Cancers figure among the leading causes of morbidity and mortality worldwide, with approximately 14 million new cases and 8.2 million cancer-related deaths in 2012.
2. The WHO has estimated that a substantial proportion of all cancers are attributable to tobacco, the environment, including working conditions, outdoor air pollution, involuntary exposure to substances over which individuals have little control, lifestyles, junk food and non-safe food.
3. Primary prevention offers the most cost-effective approach to reducing cancer and other non-communicable diseases; however, primary prevention is often neglected while secondary prevention and treatment have been given priority, partly because the results of primary prevention are difficult to recognise in individuals and because its impact may take several decades to emerge.
4. While we consider secondary prevention important as a means of halting the progress of a disease at its incipient stage and preventing complications, especially if its advantages are higher than its potential risks, we believe that more emphasis should be placed on including rigorous primary prevention strategies in cancer control policies.
5. The Commission is hence called upon to take all the necessary steps to promote primary prevention activities in order to reduce and ultimately remove any exposure to carcinogenic substances that are dangerous for humans as well as for fauna and flora.
6. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Council and the Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.