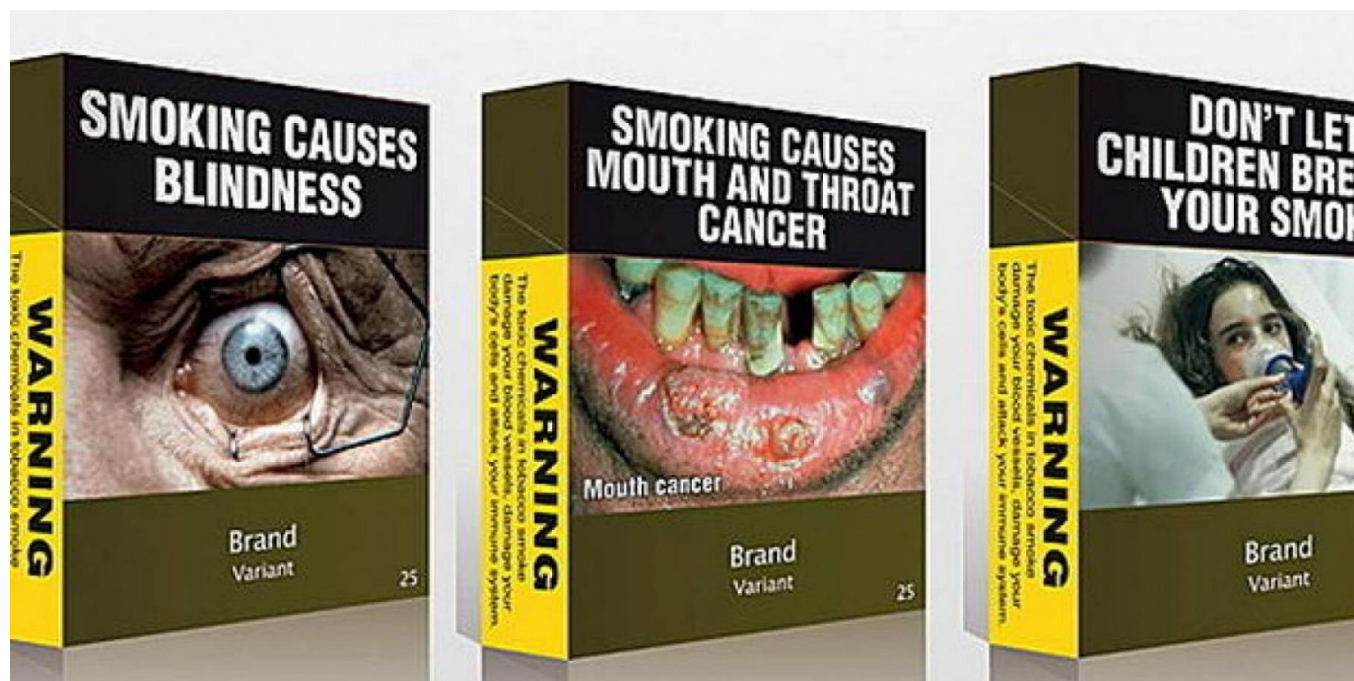

WTO backs Australia's plain packaging



Tobacco control scored two big wins in the past week. First, the World Trade Organization (WTO) rejected complaints from four tobacco-growing countries that Australia's plain cigarette packages infringed on trademarks and intellectual property rights.

Second, the WHO Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products came into force after gaining 41 Parties. Now international law the protocol, known as the ITP, gives countries around the world an arsenal of tools to coordinate their efforts to combat the illicit trade of tobacco products.

Protecting health

According to the [Framework Convention Alliance](#) [1], the coming into force of the ITP will ensure that the global tobacco trade is conducted in a manner that protects the health of their populations and ensure that governments protect significant tax revenue.

[In its decision](#) [2], the WTO panel said Australia's law improved public health by reducing the use of tobacco products, [reported Reuters news agency](#) [3].

Six other countries have brought in plain packaging laws: Hungary, Ireland, France, New Zealand, Norway and Britain, according to the WHO. Another six have passed laws yet to be implemented: Burkina Faso, Canada, Georgia, Romania, Slovenia and Thailand.

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