

Russia and New Violation of WHO FCTC Obligations: Head of Professional Tobacco Industry Organization Promoted to Federal Parliament to Influence Public Policies

On 23 March 2011 Mr. Vladimir Churov, Head of Central Electoral Commission of the Russian Federation announced shift of MPs representing “United Russia” political party in the State Duma: «CEC officially transferred authority of two deputies from “United Russia” who left State Duma... Mandate of Vladimir Orlov was received by member of Public Chamber Nadezhda Shkolkina... Shkolkina will enter Committee on Agriculture because she holds the position of deputy head of Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs...».¹

Chairman of “United Russia” is Mr. Vladimir Putin, Prime –minister of Russia.

In fact, Ms. Shkolkina is the most visible front person of tobacco industry in Russia. She is General director of the leading industry organization in Russia, “Council on issues of development of tobacco industry”, established in 2004, organization of advocates of specific excise tax on tobacco; registered as belonging to OAO “Baltic Tobacco Factory”, famous for smuggling, and branches of planetary tobacco monsters in Russia – OAO “JTI ELETS”, ZAO “Philip Morris Izhora”, OAO “Philip Morris Kuban.”^{2 3}

She is undermining WHO FCTC in mass media.^{4 5} In 2008 Russia’s Chief Sanitary Physician fiercely condemned activities of Russian tobacco sinecure headed by Ms. Shkolkina.⁶

Victorious is the third attempt of Ms. Shkolkina to gain the status of deputy of current Duma, elected in December 2007, to be reelected on 4 December 2011.

According to Russian media, Ms. Shkolkina «...used to be one of the funders of electoral campaign of “United Russia” in State Duma in December 2007...».⁷

However her first two attempts, made in 2007 and 2009, were aborted, possibly, due to vigorous resistance from civil society organizations, which included publication of open letters to the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in 2007 and to the Chairman of political party “United Russia” Vladimir Putin in 2009,⁸ exposing destructive role of Ms. Shkolkina.

She played the key and visible role in development and approval of industry alternative to WHO FCTC in Russia and CIS - Federal law N 268-FZ from 22 December 2008 “Technical regulation on tobacco products”, enforced on 26 December 2009.

⁹ The law violates WHO FCTC provisions, and Ms. Shkolkina served simultaneously as:

- member of presidium of united expert-consultative board on issues of legislative provision of economic integration under Committee on Economic Policy and Entrepreneurship of State Duma;

- deputy chairman of Expert board on issues of state regulation of production and turnover of tobacco under State Duma Committee on Economic Policy and Entrepreneurship;

- chairman of public council under Federal Ministry of Agriculture;

- member of Public Council on technical regulation under Ministry of industry and energy;

- member of commission on agro industrial complex of the board of Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RSPP) on Competitiveness and Branch Strategies.

In 2010 Ms. Shkolkina was openly selected by the tobacco industry as its Best GR-Manager of 2009 (40% at the graph), who “in fact, secured by her titanic efforts adoption of Technical Regulation in the wording acceptable for the industry”.¹⁰

¹ “United Russia” changed two deputies in State Duma. <http://www.lenta.ru/news/2011/03/23/nadezhda/> **in Russian**.

² http://www.lobbying.ru/content/persons/id_1656_linkid_105.html

³ Council on issues of Development of Tobacco Industry. Lobbying.ru http://www.lobbying.ru/content/persons/id_1656_linkid_105.html. in Russian.

⁴ <http://www.echo.msk.ru/programs/beseda/502497-echo/>

⁵ <http://sites.google.com/site/arkadiyhealth/Shkolkina.doc> Крупным шрифтом в скобках приведены комментарии авторов этого сайта.

⁶ Onischenko told which companies are killing Russians // *Vzglyad* 22.07.2008. <http://vz.ru/news/2008/7/22/188821.html>

⁷ http://www.mediaryazan.ru/articles/detail.php?SECTION_ID=2&ELEMENT_ID=10888

⁸ http://www.chaskor.ru/article/otkrytoe_pismo_vladimiru_putinu_ot_grazhdanskogo_obschestva_rossii_15927

⁹ <http://www.rg.ru/2008/12/26/tabak-dok.html>

¹⁰ <http://rustabak.ru/articles/detail.php?ID=41493>



In 2010 Ms. Shkolkina was promoted to Federal Public Chamber – top level quasi-governmental organization on the issues of civil society, and became member of Commissions: On Economic Development and Support of Entrepreneurship, On Issues of Civil Society Development and, more cynically, On Social Issues and Demography.



Victorious industry, failed public health and governance.

Ms. Shkolkina as depicted in her yesterday's interview *"With new energy. On March 23 member of Public chamber of Russia Nadezhda Shkolkina became a deputy of State Duma of RF from Ryazan Oblast on the lists of "United Russia"*.¹¹

In capacity of Duma deputy, Ms. Shkolkina is introduced as *"member of All-Russia public association "Professional Union of Workers of Agro industrial Complex of the Russian Federation", member of Presidium of Central Council of All-Russian Voluntary Association of Goods Producers "Agro industrial Union of Russia", deputy Chairman of All-Russia Agro Industrial Association of Employers."* She says she will start working *"in Committee on agrarian issues. Will be working with what I know well, it is, what is directly related to agriculture and life of rural population. As previously, I will defend interests of 27% of population of Russia..."*.¹²

Recently completed GATS proved that Russia is at the global top in tobacco use. According to Tatiana Golikova, Federal Minister of Health and Social Development, annual number of deaths caused by products of tobacco industry in our country is exceeding 400 thousand.

Russia ratified WHO FCTC on June 3, 2008. On September 13, 2010, speaking at 60-th Session of WHO European Regional Committee in Moscow, Russia, Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin claimed:

"...Russia also ratified WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and this is a really big, landmark event. We will fully take into account norms of this international act in our internal legislation...".¹³

We believe that the decision of the "United Russia" to promote effective and seasoned representative of interests of foreign tobacco industry in Russia into the Federal Parliament is a mistake, and violation of obligations of Russia under WHO FCTC, including Article 5.3.,¹⁴ because thus the industry will further influence all decisions made by Duma, including public health sphere, and will continue to use Russia to promote industry interests.

We believe that this promotion of representative of interests of 93% foreign tobacco industry in Russia, might be a clear indication of current political and administrative support of industry producing products killing up to a million Russians every two years, despite rhetoric

¹¹ <http://mediaryazan.ru/articles/detail/77018.html> 23/03/2011 in Russian

¹² <http://mediaryazan.ru/articles/detail/77018.html> 23/03/2011 in Russian

¹³ <http://premier.gov.ru/events/news/12158/> in Russian

¹⁴ "In setting and implementing their public policies with respect to tobacco control, Parties shall act to protect these policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry in accordance with national law." http://www.searo.who.int/LinkFiles/WHO_FCTC_FCTC.pdf

aimed at demographic revival. These very Russian taxpayers' money now will be used to pay for top level political functioning of tobacco deputy.

This mistake, if left uncorrected, will have national, regional and global repercussions, because, according to our recently published 408-pages book on monitoring and denormalization of tobacco industry "*Russia: Deal is Tobacco. Investigation of Mass Killing*", Russia already emerged as global tobacco superpower, dominated by 5 leading planetary tobacco companies.¹⁵

We ask WHO, FCA and all interested parties to voice concerns related to the negative developments of tobacco control in Russia and the new violation of WHO FCTC.

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¹⁵ Requests for the book are welcome.