Global cigarette consumption has been rising steadily since James Bonsack invented the first cigarette-rolling machine in 1881. By the 1960s, the ill-effects of smoking had become apparent. In some countries, consumption began leveling off and even decreasing. Worldwide, however, more people are smoking. Cigarettes account for the largest share of manufactured tobacco products (50 percent of total value sales), although in South Asia, bidi consumption exceeds cigarette consumption by an order of magnitude and use of oral tobacco remains a widespread problem.

The total number of smokers is increasing mainly due to expansion of the world’s population: by 2030, the planet will support 2 billion more people than in 2000. Unless smoking prevalence rates decline dramatically, the absolute number of smokers will continue to increase. A continuing decline in male smoking prevalence may be offset, in part, by perilous increases in female smoking rates, especially in developing countries.

Unless dramatic steps are taken to control tobacco, about 12 million children will die prematurely each year by 2020 from diseases caused by smoking. This toll will grow as cigarette consumption expands exponentially in Asia and Africa.

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12%

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