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PRESS RELEASE

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General Cigar to Appeal Decision In Cohiba Trademark Ruling

A judge in New York ruled Friday in favor of Cuban-government owned Cubatabaco in its lawsuit against General Cigar over trademark ownership of the Cohiba brand in the United States. No damages were awarded.

General Cigar, which currently manufactures and markets the Cohiba brand in the U.S., has stated that it will defend its rights and immediately appeal the ruling.

Edgar M. Cullman, Jr., President and CEO of General Cigar comments, "We are obviously disappointed in the judge's ruling. Based on our long-standing U.S. registration of the Cohiba brand and Cubatabaco's acquiescence for almost two decades, we marketed this brand with the confidence that we owned the mark. We intend to appeal this decision and feel confident that it will be overturned."

General Cigar received its first registration of the Cohiba trademark in the United States in 1981, and obtained an updated registration in 1995.

General Cigar, the leading premium cigar company in the United States, manufactures and distributes many of America's best selling cigar brands. Among these are Macanudo, Partagas, Punch, Hoya de Monterey, and La Gloria Cubana, as well as Cohiba. In the US, Swedish Match also markets such popular cigar brands as White Owl and Garcia y Vega. Swedish Match cigar sales worldwide amounted to 3 billion Swedish Crowns in 2003, or 23% of total Swedish Match sales.

Swedish Match is a unique company with its range of market-leading brands in the product areas of snuff and chewing tobacco, cigars and pipe tobacco – tobacco's niche products – as well as matches and lighters. Swedish Match owns 64% of General Cigar Co., Inc. The Group's global operations generated sales of 13,036 MSEK in 140 countries for the twelve month period ending December 31, 2003. Swedish Match shares are listed on Stockholmsbörsen (SWMA) and Nasdaq (SWMAY).

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