

WORLD OBESITY

Statement to the 69th World Health Assembly on the Guidance on ending the inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children, Agenda item 12.1 / document [A69/7](#) and [addenda 1](#)

The World Obesity Federation is a non-governmental organisation in official relations with the World Health Organization. We have as our membership over 30,000 professional clinicians and researchers in over 50 national and regional associations, and work both to reduce the prevalence of obesity and to disseminate best practices in the care and treatment of people with obesity.

Honourable chairperson, distinguished delegates, colleagues.

I am here today representing the World Obesity Federation, along with the NCD Alliance, World Cancer Research Fund International, World Public Health Nutrition Association, International Diabetes Federation, 1000 Days and the UK Health Forum.

We wish to congratulate the World Health Organization for tackling this contested issue, for the solid work of the scientific and technical advisory group and for providing robust guidance with important recommendations for action. The Guidance is a critical step forward in protecting breastfeeding and healthy diets for infants and young children free from unnecessarily added sugars, saturated fat, salt and trans-fatty acids.

Comprehensive implementation of these actions is a critical step to protect the health of infants and young children globally. We urge the members of this Assembly to endorse the Guidance, to consider with urgency the actions it recommends and to establish cross-governmental taskforces to ensure that all necessary measures to fully implement and monitor the Guidance are taken.

We also urge Member States to request from the WHO the technical assistance that may be needed to ensure that the necessary actions can be implemented rapidly and successfully, based on the development of best practices worldwide and that the outcomes are monitored and evaluated. The actions taken should be fully aligned with both the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent WHA resolutions, as well as the WHO Recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children. To this end, we also strongly urge that the WHO work to update the Codex standards to ensure they support the recommendations in the Guidance as a minimum standard.

Finally, we note that the recommendations will have potential consequences for the producers of commercial foods consumed by infants. We therefore urge Member States to protect and promote healthy diets –which we believe are the rights of infants and children worldwide – and to take steps to prevent any undue influence by commercial interests on Member States' policy decisions.

