

The World Health Organisation (WHO) draft resolution and global strategy on diet, physical activity and health is to be presented at the 57th World Health Assembly in May, 2004.

Please find enclosed the comments on the strategy that I have been authorized to submit on behalf of The Ministry of Health and the Environment of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

WHO DRAFT GLOBAL STRATEGY ON DIET, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

SUPPORT FOR THE RESOLUTION

The Ministry of Health and the Environment of the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines supports the adoption and implementation of the strongest possible resolution and global strategy on diet, physical activity and health.

COMMENTS ON THE STRATEGY

Principles for Action

Besides supporting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and being consistent with the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) the principles for action outlined in the strategy should be in accordance with other existing UN resolutions and declarations with food and nutrition components. In particular the Declaration of the International Conference on Nutrition of 1992 which called for the development of national policies and plans of action in nutrition and one of whose nine themes dealt with promotion of healthy diets and active lifestyles and also to the relevant sections of the World Food Summit of 1996.

Responsibilities for Action – Member States

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is committed in principle to and has already started work on responsibilities 30 – 34, 35(1) and 42, but requires substantial technical and financial assistance in fulfilling them.

Both technical and financial assistance are also needed to build commitment to and aid implementation of responsibilities 35 through 41, particularly # 36 and #41 as #36 is strongly linked to unbalanced agricultural and economic policy and # 41 to lack of capacity in surveillance, research and evaluation and the absence of food consumption, anthropometric and physical activity data at community and national levels will hamper implementation of the strategy.

Other areas of weakness requiring assistance are those of:

1. empowering communities and consumer groups to analyze health situations and advocate for diet, physical activity and health programmes and facilitating environments and;
2. engaging the private sector in accepting/fulfilling responsibilities in improving diet, physical activity and health for communities and the nation

Please pass on to the Coordinator as we have no point of contact.

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