

Statement of I.R. Iran on "Maternal, infant and young child nutrition

We appreciate the secretariat for developing the document EB154/22 and inclusion of this agenda item in the consolidated report of WHO DG numbered A77/4.

To create a supportive environment for the implementation of comprehensive food and nutrition policies, as outlined in action 1 of the document, there is Nutrition Department in the Ministry of Health, which develops nutrition policies across the country. It is also responsible for monitoring of nutritional programs. Additionally, the Supreme Council of Health and Food Security has established to enhance inter-sectoral cooperation and to ensure the effective implementation of food and nutrition policies in the country. The head of this council is the president and its secretary is the minister of health. Furthermore, a comprehensive document on nutrition and food security, serving as the country's 10-year roadmap, has been developed and approved through collaboration with all stakeholders.

Moving to "Maternal, infant and young child nutrition

As it is rightly mentioned in the document (action 2), the member states are advised to integrate nutritional interventions in PHC. I.R. Iran is one of the leading countries that has integrated nutrition programs in PHC) setting and we have hired nutritionists in PHC system, through which free access to nutritional services became feasible for the public. Iranians receive nutritional counseling to prevent/or control non-communicable diseases from these nutritionists. In addition, free vitamin and mineral supplementation is accessible and offered in the health centers. HCWs identify vulnerable children and pregnant women then introduce them to supportive organizations to receive food packages.

In the realm of non-health sector policies and programs (action 3), collaborations with stakeholders have led to the formulation of laws prohibiting the advertising of harmful health products and imposing taxes on them, developing the guidelines for school canteens, etc. Additionally, the national Whole Wheat Bread Program and School Milk Program are being implemented nationwide in collaboration with all

relevant authorities. Ensuring human and financial resources for the implementation of health and nutrition programs has always been a priority for the Ministry of Health (as outlined in action 4 of document). Monitoring and evaluation of programs are conducted through electronic health systems and periodic national monitoring. Continuous efforts are in place to improve nutrition programs and to promote nutritional status of the public community (action 5).

Unfortunately, the Eastern Mediterranean region is severely affected by food insecurity and increased malnutrition, where major contributing factors are conflict, population displacement, and migration. Women and children are the most affected groups by those factors. We call for more support and efforts by the UN agencies in order to vigorously advocate for peace in this region to reduce conflicts, which would definitely result in reduced hunger and malnutrition in the region

Madam/Mr. chair, thank you for this opportunity.

**Nutrition Department
Undersecretary for Public Health
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