

**WHA30.51 The role of the health sector in the development of national and international food and nutrition policies and plans**

The Thirtieth World Health Assembly,

Having reviewed in detail the background document for the Technical Discussions on the importance of national and international food and nutrition policies for health development, and having reviewed the report of the Technical Discussions held on this subject at the current session;

Recognizing that malnutrition is one of the major health problems in the world, becoming all the more evident as some communicable diseases are being controlled; and that dietary deficits in the developing countries and excesses and imbalances in developed countries continue to affect adversely the health of large sectors of the population in both groups of countries;

Recognizing the need also for improved quality and safety of food, particularly in relation to the process of industrialization;

Concerned at the inadequate attention and commitments being given by the health and other sectors in a great number of countries to improve this critical situation;

1. EXPRESSES its general agreement with the conclusions and recommendations that have emerged from the Technical Discussions;

2. URGES governments:

- (1) to give higher priority to food and nutrition problems within their health programmes;
- (2) to further develop multisectoral programmes specifically oriented to improve the nutritional situation of the population, and to improve the quality of food;
- (3) to consider the food and nutritional implications of their development policies and plans;
- (4) to give to these actions greater political, technical and financial support than heretofore;
- (5) to pay attention to both qualitative and quantitative aspects of nutrition;

3. REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to take the additional necessary steps to strengthen the WHO nutrition programme in order that the Organization may play its legitimate role in the development and implementation of national and international food and nutrition policies and plans, with the aim of:

- (a) providing the necessary stimulus and technical cooperation to Member countries for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their health services in health-related nutritional programmes;
- (b) strengthening the research capacity and education and training in nutritional programmes, with priority in the developing countries;
- (c) eliminating the florid forms of malnutrition such as kwashiorkor, marasmus and keratomalacia as public health problems at least by the turn of this century;
- (d) identifying problem areas such as the interaction between malnutrition on the one hand and infection and productive capacity on the other, and hence integrating relevant action programmes;
- (e) determining the most vulnerable population groups (groups at risk) in relation to the programmes for protecting the health of mothers and children and of the working population;

- (f) establishing priorities in regard to health-related nutritional problems, according to the particular conditions of the country;
  - (g) developing systems for nutritional surveillance as a basis for action programmes and for their evaluation;
  - (h) developing systems for the control of contamination of foodstuffs by pesticides, mycotoxins, and other toxic substances;
  - (i) supporting ministries of health in their efforts to introduce nutritional objectives in the national development plans, and to develop and implement multisectoral food and nutrition policies and programmes;
- (2) to consult with Member States and relevant national and international agencies in order to obtain assistance in the development of intensified nutrition programmes, including the technical and financial aspects;
- (3) to report on the progress being made on the implementation of this programme to the sixty-first session of the Executive Board and to the Thirty-first World Health Assembly.