



WEBSITE

1211 GENEVA 27 SWITZERLAND - TELEPHONE: 791.21 11 - TELEX: 415.416 - FAX: 791.07 46 - E-MAIL: [inf@who.int](mailto:inf@who.int)

Note for the press N°21  
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## WHO CONTINUES DIALOGUE WITH FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY EXECUTIVES ON DIET AND CHRONIC DISEASES

**Meeting with the private sector focuses on Diet and Physical Activity Global Strategy process, and advertising and marketing to children**

World Health Organization (WHO) officials continued their dialogue with the private sector on diet and health during an all-day meeting attended by senior executives from the food and beverage sectors and industry associations at Echenevex, France on 17 July 2003. The meeting followed up on a roundtable meeting between former WHO Director-General Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, and CEOs and senior executives, held in May, which addressed the positive role the private sector could play in promoting good diet and physical activity and the impact of foods and beverages high in fats, sugar and salt, on the growing chronic disease burden.

The meeting, facilitated by the Prince of Wales International Business Leaders' Forum and Strategy XXI, was attended by representatives from Cadbury Schweppes plc, Coca Cola Company, Confederation Food & Drink Industries, Ferrero Group, Kellogg Management Services (Europe) Ltd., Kraft Foods, Grocery Manufacturers of America, McDonald's Europe, Masterfoods (Division of Mars UK Ltd), Nestlé, Novartis Consumer Health (Infant/Baby), PepsiCo, Inc, Procter and Gamble AG, Royal Ahold, Unilever Union of European Soft Drinks and Confederation of International Soft Drinks Associations (UNESDA/CISDA), Winterthur Insurance and Yum! Brands, Inc.

Participants shared experience and discussed concerns around the advertising and marketing of food and beverages to children and considered the scope for different approaches towards these issues, where there was public concern.

Cardiovascular disease, cancers, diabetes, respiratory disease, obesity and other noncommunicable conditions now account for 59 per cent of the 56.5 million global deaths annually, and almost half, or 45.9 per cent, of the global burden of disease. The majority of chronic disease problems now occur in developing countries. Unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and tobacco use are among the leading causes.

In response to Member State concern, WHO is currently preparing a Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health for presentation to World Health Assembly in May 2004. The formal consultation process on the Strategy, which has included six regional Member State

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meetings, as well as meetings with other UN and international agencies, the private sector and NGOs, has now been completed. WHO is currently drafting the final Strategy document for presentation to its Executive Board by January 2004.

During the recent meeting WHO officials briefed the private sector representatives on the key concerns which have come from Member States and others on diet, physical activity and their impact on chronic disease, and on the Strategy process (*detail on the Consultation Process and meeting reports are available on [www.who.int/hpr/global.strategy.shtml](http://www.who.int/hpr/global.strategy.shtml)* ) Continuing dialogue is planned on the positive contributions all sectors can make towards improved diet and increased physical activity on a global basis.

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For further information please contact Amalia Waxman, Project Manager, Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health 41-22-791-3353 (o) 41-79-475-5573 (m) David Porter, Media Officer, Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health 41-22-791-3774 (o) 41-79-477-1740 (m)

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