



Remarks of Anne Heughan, Co-Chair of the International Food & Beverage Alliance Delivered to Member States, Geneva, 18 January 2012

Dear Ministers, Ambassadors, Representatives of the Diplomatic Community, Ladies and Gentleman, thank you all for joining us this morning for our breakfast. I am Anne Heughan, External Affairs Director of Unilever and along with Jorge Casimiro, Director of International Government Relations and Public Affairs for The Coca-Cola Company serve as Co-Chair of the International Food & Beverage Alliance.

This morning we want to inform you about IFBA and the role we have played in NCDs as well as to gain your insight into our role ahead. IFBA are committed to the fight against NCDs, and I personally used to be involved in a UK charity that lobbied for the prevention of CHD to be put onto the public agenda so the work that is being done now at a global level is very important to me. As IFBA, we wholly endorse the conclusion of the *Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases* adopted by Member States in September – finding solutions to NCDs requires the “whole of society,” including the private sector.

IFBA brings together ten global food and non-alcoholic beverage companies around a common goal of helping people around the world to achieve balanced diets and healthy, active lifestyles. Our members include The Coca-Cola Company, Ferrero, General Mills, Grupo Bimbo, Kellogg’s, Kraft Foods, Mars, Nestlé, PepsiCo and Unilever. In September, our membership expanded from food manufacturers to include the quick-serve restaurant industry as we welcomed McDonald’s as an observer member.

Since the adoption of the 2004 *Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*, our companies have pursued actions aimed at advancing the goals of that strategy. In 2008, our CEOs took the initiative in establishing five, public commitments to action to the WHO in support of the 2004 *Global Strategy*.

These are the actions that the *Political Declaration* calls for our industry to deliver, and they are the actions IFBA members have been implementing voluntarily around the world. We have reformulated and developed tens of thousands of products – with less fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar or salt, and added ingredients of nutritional benefit, including whole grains, vegetables, fruit and micronutrients. We provide fact-based nutrition information on pack and by other means to consumers. We restrict how and what we advertise to children globally and take a leadership role in adopting similar policies at the local level through national pledge programmes. We provide leadership in these areas that encourages local companies who are not members of IFBA to join. We encourage healthy lifestyles, including balanced meals and increased physical activity with our consumers and in workplace wellness programs for our 1.2 million employees around the world.

Transparency and accountability underpins our commitments. We report publicly and annually on our progress and are in the process of strengthening our monitoring. We are in the third year of a monitoring and evaluation process with Accenture Media Management, to assess compliance and progress against our global policy on marketing to children, and we have just written to Dr. Chan and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to explain how we have strengthened this policy. This year we retained a well-known research firm, SRA, to establish a monitoring and validation procedure on several of our other commitments. The results of this exercise will be published by the end of the year.

We believe that industry has an important and unique role in addressing NCDs -- and are committed to do our part. Experience at the Member State level, where many of you have already made a start, has shown that in acting together we can make a difference.

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We support the approach taken in the *Political Declaration* and in the WHO discussion paper on proposed voluntary targets and monitoring for evidence-based, cost-effective, population-wide interventions. In addition, the WHO will be mandated to develop the next phase of the Action Plan on NCDs. We believe this should go hand-in-hand with the global monitoring framework.

However, we face certain challenges, or should I say, opportunities. The private sector, including IFBA, does not have a proper forum for engagement with WHO and Member States. And, as you know, the issue of public-private engagement and governance is currently being debated at WHO and among academics and NGOs. We understand there are competing interests and governance concerns, but only yesterday the NCD Alliance stated that it supports civil society participation in the establishment of a genuinely multisectoral partnerships for NCDs.

Fundamentally, if we are to address the global challenge of NCDs with a “whole of society” approach, we should bring our collective experience together to make recommendations for what will work best at the global, regional, national and local levels. By working together we can make a difference to public health.

The High-level Meeting was a first and important step to bring all stakeholders together at a global level to address the complex problem of NCDs. We now face another important step – how do we realize a “whole of society” approach? How can we find a creative way for WHO and Member States to engage constructively with the private sector, and particularly IFBA, to tap into the expertise and experience we bring to the table to ensure a successful outcome of all our efforts?

Therefore, we would like to gain your thoughts on the challenges and opportunities.

Thank you, and now I suggest we move to the tables where IFBA members can answer further questions and gain insight into your thoughts.