



S T A T E M E N T

by Dr. Anna Yu. POPOVA, head of the Russian delegation at the Second International FAO/WHO Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), Head of the Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Well-being (Rospotrebnadzor) – Chief State Sanitary Physician of the Russian Federation, under the agenda item 4 «General Debate»
(Rome, November 19, 2014)

Mr. Chairman,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The conference that we are holding today is an important milestone in fostering international efforts towards eliminating all forms of malnutrition and its negative effects – undernutrition, overweight and obesity, vitamin and micronutrient deficiencies. The high level of political support of that event and the problems it tackles will ensure the adoption of global priorities in those areas in the midterm.

We welcome the comprehensive multisectoral approach to nutrition issues that lies at the heart of the ICN2 outcome documents. We agree with the need to take into account specificities of food systems and all the elements of the food chain to promote healthy diets. Russia pays special attention to education on nutrition and healthy lifestyles, food safety and quality control, social protection of vulnerable population groups. We actively advocate for healthy nutrition as a means of preventing the spread of non-communicable diseases. We are also increasing focus on reducing food losses and waste.

The issues of nutrition and food quality are traditionally on top of the agenda in Russia. A strong legislative framework was built in that field. The 1998 Concept of the State Policy in the Field of Healthy Nutrition at Federal and Regional Levels, the Food Security Doctrine and the Foundations of the State Policy of the Russian Federation on Healthy Nutrition up to 2020 both adopted in 2010 as well as 2014 Concept of Domestic Food Aid Development are among our key documents.

After the First International Conference on Nutrition in 1992 Russia has made considerable progress in realizing its recommendations, especially those concerning the problem of healthy diets. The measures taken resulted in increasing the average annual per capita consumption of fish by 90%, of fruit and berries – by 50%, of meat – by 40%, of vegetables – by 30%. Today about 40% of infant foods are fortified with biologically valuable components. A rigorous system of food safety and quality monitoring is in place based on risk evaluation and modern methods of analysis.

Of course, Russia continues to face serious challenges in that field. More than half of Russian adults over the age of 30 are overweight or obese. The statistics of the prevalence of severe non-communicable diseases linked with that problem are high. Vitamin and micronutrient deficiencies are registered in many regions.

We are not satisfied with that situation. At the national level we have set a goal to reduce by 30% the prevalence of obesity and hypertensive disease by 2020. Adequate consumption of vitamins by children and adults is expected to rise by 70% as compared to 2010. The level of coverage by balanced quality nutrition at production sites and in other institutions is planned to reach 80%.

At the same time, we are committed to the principle that food safety is an integral part of food security. Our country policy in that area is based on the need to prevent accommodating trade liberalization and reduction of production costs at the expense of increases in health risks. We do not agree with the concept of acceptable risk when it concerns the health of our citizens.

Russia devotes much attention to food security and nutrition in the international agenda. For instance, with the use of our voluntary contributions the UN World Food Programme provided food aid and assistance to two scores of countries during 2010-2014 accounting for almost 210 million USD. Of that amount about 47 million USD were allocated to support school feeding programmes in a number of countries in Asia, Near East and North Africa.

We are convinced that food security and nutrition as well as agricultural development that is closely linked to them should receive due attention in the Post-2015 Global Development Agenda.

Russia commends FAO and WHO for organizing the ICN2 and focusing international attention on the issue of nutrition. We believe that it is important to continue the coordinated activities of the UN System bodies in that field drawing on the recommendations of the Conference. We are in favour of strengthening such essential mechanisms for the topic of nutrition as the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission. Russia supports the reinforcement of FAO's role in coordination of the ICN2 follow-up with the involvement of WHO and other specialized UN structures.

Thank You for Your attention.