

## Speech of the Swedish delegation to ICN2

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**Speaker:**  
**Head of Delegation**  
**Pernilla Ivarsson, Deputy Director-General**  
**Ministry for Rural Affairs, Sweden**

Excellencies, dear colleagues,

Sweden fully aligns itself with the statement made by Italy on behalf of the EU and its Member States.

Eating habits are crucial for our health and are a central part of our lives and cultures. The layout and content of meals have significance not only for health and eating habits, but are also prerequisite for well-being and learning.

If you start with good habits early in life, these stay with you more easily. In Sweden, schooling became compulsory in 1842, and later in the 1840's school food was introduced among the poor or ill children in some regions. Today, the Swedish Education Act from 2011 stipulates that all pupils in primary school will be served a school lunch that is both free and nutritious.

Furthermore, in 2011 the government decided to broaden its efforts to serve good public meals. Thus the Centre of Competence for certain public meals was born. The purpose of the Competence centre is to provide expertise in nutrition, hygiene and safety, sensory science, culinary arts, sustainable eating habits and related subjects in the work responsibilities that can be related to preparing and serving public meals. The

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centre is active on social media, creating awareness, and encouraging initiatives from the public. Responsibility for providing public meals lies with the 290 municipalities and 20 county councils.

But how can we combine healthy diets with using eco-smart food and avoiding food waste? The Swedish National Food Agency has taken the first steps by defining environmentally sound dietary guidelines. Additionally, a food waste reduction project is on-going where studies and initiatives regarding total food waste and avoidable food waste in the Nordic countries, Great Britain, and the Netherlands are reviewed.

In this context, I would like to invite you all to the side event on Thursday evening, where the Nordic countries will further detail possible ways to achieve good nutrition for all.

But action on local, national and regional level does not solve the global problem of malnutrition. The focus must be on empowering women, who must have the same opportunities as men to access land, affordable credit, improved farm inputs, information and innovation.

We commend the joint work of FAO and WHO done in preparation for this conference and realise that it has not always been plain sailing. Sweden is a firm believer in global cooperation and we look forward to continued joint efforts of the UN system, each taking the lead within their mandate and assisting within the mandates of others.

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We applaud the adoption of the Rome Declaration and the Framework for Action.

However, the toughest work is before us – implementation – rest assured that Sweden will continue to follow and support these efforts over the long-term.

Thank you Chair!