

**Second International Conference on Nutrition,
Rome, 19 – 21 November 2014**

**Statement by State Secretary of Foreign Affairs Hans Brattskar
Norway**

**Thank you, Mr. Chairman,
Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,**

I want to commend FAO and WHO for convening this important conference on nutrition.

To be free from hunger and have access to adequate, safe, nutritious and affordable food, is a fundamental human right and equally important for living a healthy life. For these reasons a rights-based approach to food and nutrition security must figure prominently in the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

The FAO Voluntary guidelines on the right to adequate food should be used actively by countries to fulfill this right for their citizens.

Food scarcity and nutrition deficiency have lasting negative effects on children's ability to learn and will have lifelong consequences. Food and nutrition insecurity retard economic development. Conflicts and outbreaks of disease aggravate food and nutrition insecurity – recent examples being the Syria and South-Sudan crises' and West-Africa during the Ebola outbreak

Chair,

Malnutrition in all its forms continues to be a huge challenge in developing, as well as in developed countries. We know what we need to do. We clearly need to become better nationally as well as globally to tackle the complex challenges of nutrition.

Global reduction in stunting, wasting and micronutrient deficiencies in children is too slow. Micronutrient deficiency has inter-generational impacts. To educate, in particular the girl child and the expectant mother about nutrition, is an investment in the family and in society. The “1000s days opportunity”, from a woman becomes pregnant to the child is two years old, must be used to put in place policies and strategies to provide the child a fair chance in life. Breast-feeding in a baby’s first six months and beyond will give a child a solid nutritious start in life, no matter where they live in the world. Addressing anemia in women and adolescent girls will improve the health for women and their children and improve their chance to reach their full potential. It all boils down to the empowerment of women. This is one reason Gender Equality and access to education for teenage girls are such important parts of the Post 2015 agenda.

In 1992 we did not perceive the escalating burden of obesity and non-communicable diseases. Obesity is often due to consumption of unhealthy, processed food, rich in saturated fats, salt and sugar. WHO with its normative global mandate has recommendations for a healthy diet, for healthy lifestyles and recommendations to regulate marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages to children. These recommendations must inform and translate into national policies and regulations to implement the ICN2 decisions. Governments must

involve stakeholders, including Civil Society Organization and private sector to make this a reality.

We know incentives like taxes and duties can change consumer behaviour. It happened with tobacco use in Norway. Recent national nutrition measures include updating national nutrition guidelines based on the Nordic Recommendations. Furthermore, a White Paper on public health will be presented to the Parliament during spring 2015. The white paper will take a broad cross-sectoral approach and will encompass nutrition in a public health perspective.

Chair,

Last month, the Committee of World Food Security agreed to “Give to fish the position it deserves in food security and nutrition strategies and programmes”. The CFS High Level Expert Report emphasises that “*Fish is strikingly missing from strategies for reduction of micronutrient deficiency, precisely where it could potentially have the largest impact*”. Fish is a well-known source of unique nutrients like marine omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D and iodine. These qualities are not fully recognized in global food security and nutrition, even though fish can provide important micronutrients to vulnerable groups, pregnant and lactating women and children.

This fact is not adequately taken on board in the ICN2 outcome documents. This is regrettable, and needs to be rectified in the follow up.

Chair,

We must work across sectors, professions and with all stakeholders to successfully promote this global agenda where FAO and WHO must take the

lead. We must act smart and realize that we will not reach our goals for improved nutrition unless we take fully into account the impact of climate change. Only then can we feed a growing world population with a sustainable as well as a healthy diet. Policies to address Healthy and sustainable food systems, food loss and waste and policies for Climate Smart Agriculture, are important steps to this end. Public-private partnership initiatives, such as the Stordalen EAT Initiative, presented at the preparatory technical meeting last year, is positive, needed and encouraged.

Chair,

ICN2 comes at an important moment when we chart the course for the sustainable development agenda beyond 2015. Let us make full use of this opportunity at the global, regional and national levels to realize the vision of a zero hunger and adequate, safe, nutritious and affordable food for all.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.