



Inter-Parliamentary Union

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Chemin du Pommier 5
Case postale 330
1218 Le Grand-Saconnex
Geneva – Switzerland
www.ipu.org

Final Statement

Mr Pier Ferdinando Casini

Honorary President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,
Senator of the Italian Republic and
President of the 3rd Permanent
Commission on Foreign Affairs and
Emigration of the Senate of the Italian
Republic

Parliaments for better nutrition

Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion
of the Second International Conference
on Nutrition (ICN2),
organized by the Inter-Parliamentary
Union with the sponsorship of the Italian
Parliament

Rome, 21 November 2014.

We, Members of Parliament from across the world, assembled on 18 November 2014 in Rome on the occasion of the Second FAO/WHO International Conference on Nutrition (Rome, 19-21 November 2014), issue the following statement as a contribution to the final outcome of the Conference.

We express our deep concern that, despite progress made in reducing hunger and undernourishment across the planet, about 805 million people are still chronically hungry, over 161 million children are stunted, 99 million underweight and 51 million wasted (low weight-for-height), while two billion people suffer various micronutrient deficiencies and more than 500 million adults are obese; and we underscore that the elimination of malnutrition in all its forms is an imperative which spares no country and must be achieved within our life time.

We are aware of the opportunity that the ICN2 presents to Parliaments as institutions which can address malnutrition in line with their constitutional mandates.

We note the commitments made through the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action, particularly those that pertain to the role of Parliaments in addressing malnutrition and thereby contributing to our shared vision of a sustainable world with food security and adequate nutrition for all.

We reaffirm the right of everyone to have access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food, consistent with the Right to Adequate Food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, and acknowledge the need for its further recognition through specific constitutional and legislative provisions.

Following the adoption of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action, we see an urgent need for Parliaments to advocate for more effective responses to address malnutrition, while ensuring that public policies are safeguarded from real or perceived conflict of interests.

We underscore the importance of parliamentary dialogue in countries, regions and globally, in order to share good practice and experiences in ensuring food security and adequate nutrition. At the same time, we encourage colleagues around the world to continue to work to strengthen their own parliamentary institutions through proactive measures to endow the parliament with greater accountability and oversight powers.

We therefore call on Parliaments to:

1. Adopt national nutrition targets to be attained by 2025, as well as a set of national indicators, taking into consideration the six global nutrition targets included in the WHO Comprehensive Implementation Plan on Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition and the core set and extended set of outcome and progress indicators, as well as targets set in the Post-2015 Development agenda.
2. Adopt national nutrition policies and plans to attain national nutrition targets in 2025, taking into account the vision and commitments included in the Rome Declaration on Nutrition, the policy options included in Framework for Action.
3. Develop legislation and oversee regulations to create health-promoting environments and encourage healthy choices for all by protecting, educating and empowering consumers. This includes measures such as the establishment of labelling standards (including information on sugars, salts, fats and trans-fat content) which respect people's right to know; marketing regulations in particular for children; and consumer education through national campaigns and schools. Legislation and regulation for different settings may be considered for action, for example, in schools, workplaces, households, cities and local communities.
4. Adopt policies and legislation that supports the production and processing of good quality foods that are safe and conducive to a healthy diet, including measures to diversify food production (in particular fruits and vegetables), to establish and implement food quality standards, and to formulate/reformulate food products that provide healthier options. Ensure that legislation adopted by Parliaments to improve nutrition pays particular attention to the important role of family farmers and small holders, notably women farmers, in reducing malnutrition.
5. Adopt policies and legislation to promote exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and protect women's right to breastfeed.
6. Support policies, programmes and legislation to improve access to healthy diets through poverty reduction, employment creation and social protection, including school meal programmes.
7. Develop legislation and support policies to empower women and support them in their role as producers, income earners, and caretakers, such as the adherence to the ILO Maternity Protection Convention and increasing access to quality health care (including ante and post-natal care).
8. Approve increased and prioritized budgetary allocations for addressing malnutrition and food insecurity and explore the provision of adequate, predictable and sustained resources, including capacity development programs for policy makers, government institutions and general public.
9. Oversee different sectors to ensure public policy coherence (trade, economic development, agriculture, health and education) and that addressing malnutrition receives a cross-sectoral and holistic response.

10. Promote collaborative arrangements within the Parliament and across Parliaments for better nutrition, working across party lines, sharing experiences and good practices based on national and international review, promoting South-South and triangular cooperation,.
11. Request that the IPU include into its 132nd Assembly, in March 2015, an item on nutrition and the ICN2 follow-up .