

MISSJONI PERMANENTI TA' MALTA



PERMANENT MISSION OF MALTA

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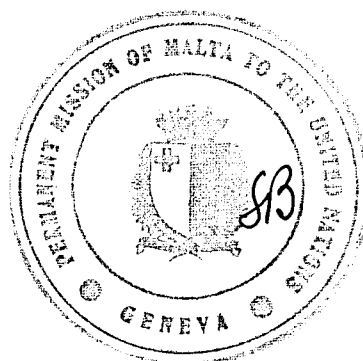
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**NMH**

The Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations Organisations and Other Specialised Agencies in Geneva presents its compliments to the Assistant Director General for Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health of the World Health Organisation and with reference to Note C.L.2.2004 dated 28 January 2004, has the honour to forward the comments of the Government of Malta concerning the WHO Draft Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, in accordance with the decision taken by the Executive Board at its 113<sup>th</sup> Session on 22 January 2004.

The Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations Organisations and Other Specialised Agencies in Geneva takes this opportunity to renew to the Assistant Director General for Non-communicable Diseases and Mental Health of the World Health Organisation, the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2004



Assistant Director General  
Non-communicable Diseases and Mental Health  
World Health Organisation  
Geneva

**Received in**

**27 FEB 2004**

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## **Malta's Comments on the WHO Draft Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health**

Malta expresses its gratitude for the possibility to comment on the WHO Draft Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

Malta finds the Strategy necessary and timely, and congratulates the Secretariat for the work carried out so far.

Malta agrees with the background and supports a strong global Strategy. The burden of disease related to poor diet and physical inactivity is considerable and of great public health significance. However great, this may be reduced through a strategy on diet and physical activity that includes international collaboration and global leadership by WHO.

A global strategy will help strengthen and consolidate national efforts to promote a healthier diet and lifestyle, particularly in view of the fact that cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity are major issues of public health concern in Malta.

Moreover, Malta is working on the development of a National Food and Nutrition Action Plan based on the WHO Action Plan. The main focus of our efforts so far has been on behavioural change through the provision of information and education. However, we recognise that a multi-sectoral and sustained approach, which is very much in line with the proposed strategy, will lead to the reduction of major risk factors and improved public health.

Concerning the question of '*individual responsibility*' as discussed by the Executive Board, Malta agrees with the concept of individual responsibility, however believes that public strategies and actions are necessary to make the healthier choice the easier choice.

Malta looks forward to adoption of the strategy at the World Health Assembly in May 2004 and to its effective implementation towards the reduction of non-communicable diseases through the promotion of healthy diet and physical activity.