



REF: 40/2004

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the World Health Organization and has honour to convey the following comments on the draft strategy on diet, physical activity and health.

1. The Government of South Africa welcomes the WHO draft global strategy on diet, physical activity and health. We believe that the draft strategy provides a strong foundation for on-going work, both nationally and internationally, and that indeed its implementation will go a long way in reducing the burden of morbidity, mortality and disability attributable to non-communicable diseases. South Africa therefore fully supports this draft strategy.

2 We would, however, in a effort to strengthen the draft strategy, like to make the following observations as well as highlight certain issues that are either omitted or not given sufficient attention:

2.1 The role that poverty plays in the nutritional status of people and proposals to specifically address this.

2.2 **The last bullet of paragraph 22 (page 7):** The statement made is correct, however, in addition it should be taken into account that in certain cultural groups decisions taken by women are highly influenced by the preferences of the husband or male partner.

2.3 **Paragraph 35(3):** Provision should be made for people with impaired vision.

2.4 **Paragraph 38:** More emphasis should be placed on "limit the availability of products high in salt, sugar and fats."

2.5 **Paragraph 41:** Member States should recognize that the burden of NCDs (in terms of effective management, prevention of complications, reduced morbidity and mortality) has been subjugated by the HIV and AIDS pandemic and that the longer this singular approach to the various health issues continues, the greater will be the ultimate burden.

2.6 Surveillance, research and evaluation pertaining to NCDs must enjoy more prominence.

2.7 **Paragraph 43:** Funding for prevention of NCDs as well as for strategies focusing on the common risk factors of unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and tobacco use should be increased and partnerships between Governments and private sector should be strengthened to achieve the common goal of health for all.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of South Africa to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails of this opportunity to renew to the World Health Organization the assurances of its highest consideration

Geneva, 28 February 2004

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