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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD TECHNOLOGY & NATURAL RESOURCES



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7th June, 2002

NMH for
advice pls -

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Dear Dr Gro Harlem Brundtland,

Global Burden of Obesity and other Chronic Diseases

Following the presentation of your report at the World Health Assembly, I am writing to enquire into one of the actions under the Programme on Non-Communicable Disease Prevention and Health Promotion in which FAO is also a partner.

I understand that an Expert Consultation has been held on the subject of "Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic disease" and that a draft Report from this Consultation has been made available for comment on the WHO web site. This draft Report appears remarkably similar in its conclusions to a Technical Report of the same title that was published by WHO in 1990. The main conclusion of particular note in this new Report is that it advocates (in common with the earlier report) the adoption of common quantitative targets for nutrient intake by every population group in the world.

You may not be aware that this earlier Technical Report was widely criticised among the scientific community and its principal conclusions rejected by, amongst others, the FAO. Two subsequent Expert Consultations, in which both WHO and FAO were partners, rejected the approach advocated by the 1990 Technical Report. It seems inconceivable that this new Report will receive any greater support, especially since its general approach is now seen as profoundly dated.

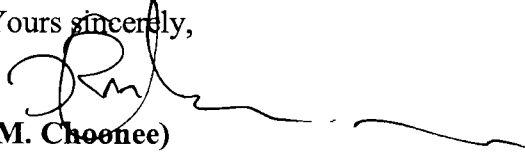
The draft Report also contains a wide range of policy proposals that, if implemented, would raise serious difficulties for many developing countries.

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DIRECTOR

I should be grateful for your assurance that this new draft Report will be subject to the widest consultation with Member Governments before it is finalised and that any concerns that may be raised are fully considered.

Yours sincerely,



(M. Choonee)
Acting Minister

Dr Gro Harlem Brundland
Director General
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Switzerland