

**Statement to the 69th World Health Assembly
Agenda item 12.2, Report of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity A69/8**

Thank you Chair for the opportunity to address the distinguished delegates on behalf of Medicus Mundi International and People's Health Movement. We welcome this report and note the excellent work that has gone into producing a series of recommendations which could make a significant impact in mitigating the childhood obesity crisis, if implemented by member states.

In particular, we endorse the proposed recommendations in support of a tax on sugary beverages. The implementation of taxation on tobacco demonstrated the powerful impact these policies can have on public health, and it is encouraging to see such a measure taken for sugar. This policy must be supported by greater MS investment in increasing access to healthy foods, physical activity facilities and space in every strata of society, which could be subsidised from the proceeds of a tax.

The recommendations call on the private sector to support the production of, and facilitate access to, foods and non-alcoholic beverages that contribute to a healthy diet. While this is welcome, it is disappointing that the report fails to hold the food industry explicitly accountable for its central role in the childhood obesity crisis, or the growing protection they receive under increasingly prevalent Investor State Dispute Settlement mechanisms. It is vital that Member States explore greater regulation of the food industry in order to reduce their impact.

In the light of the WHO's mandate to protect public health, we urge the secretariat to acknowledge the role of private actors in accelerating the obesity crisis, and to provide guidance to Member States on policy options to mitigate their adverse impacts.

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