

Ambassador Nicolas Bideau,
Director
Présence Suisse
Bundesgasse 32
3003 Bern



4th November 2014

Dear Ambassador Nicolas Bideau,

Nestle Promotion of branded bottled water at EXPO 2015

I am writing to you on behalf of IBFAN, the 35 year-old global network of 170 citizens groups in 162 countries working to protect breastfeeding and young child health. In view of your role as the Director responsible for the organization of the Swiss Pavillion at the EXPO 2015 exhibition in Milan, I wish to share our grave concerns regarding one of the planned promotions.

I understand that Présence Suisse is the department of the Swiss Government that is responsible for the image of Switzerland abroad, so perhaps you will share my concern that Nestlé, the world's largest baby food promoter and a company famous for its bad environmental and child rights record, has not only been chosen as a sponsor of EXPO 2015, but is being allowed to have a 'tower' filled with branded bottles of water as part of its display.

This can surely only do harm to the international reputation of Switzerland, a country globally renowned for the quality of its public water services. It is also inconsistent with principles held by all who are concerned about the environment and global warming. Branded bottled water is an expensive and wasteful way to provide water to those who need it because of the energy required to manufacture PET bottles and the transport the heavy, filled bottles. Nestlé's bottled water also uses idealising claims and brand names such as *Pure Life* to increase sales. Such promotion undermines government resolve to provide water as a public service under democratic supervision.

In addition to the crassness of the 'water tower' we note that Nestlé is promoting the privatisation of water through the Water Resources Group (WRG) in partnership with Coca Cola, Pepsi and the World Bank. This is in direct opposition to the wishes of the 1.6 million signatories to the call from the European Citizen's Initiative that water be regarded as a public good.

In view of the above concerns, we would appreciate your assurance that Nestlé will be refused a place at EXPO 2015, and certainly not granted permission to promote the water tower. Instead we call on Présence Suisse to highlight the reality of public water management in Switzerland and so set an example for the whole world.

Yours sincerely

Patti Rundall, OBE
Co-Chair, IBFAN