

**IBFAN statement – as delivered 2pm ish 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Committee B**

**Seventy-third World Health Assembly 9-14 November 2020 (resumed)**

**Agenda Item: 15 Review of and update on matters considered by the Executive Board**

Thanks you Mr Chair

IBFAN considers the proposed draft Decision on Maternal, infant and young child nutrition to end the biennial reporting in 2030 to be a misinterpretation that leads to an unacceptable risk. Harmful commercial promotion – especially in countries without effective laws and further exacerbated by the COVID, undermines WHO messages, misleads parents and threatens child survival and health.

Biennial reporting is a core part of the International Code and should only end when there is convincing evidence that countries have adopted effective legislation that is independently monitored and that harmful marketing has been eliminated.

There is no evidence that companies will abide by voluntary codes unless they agree with them, so harmful marketing will not stop until then - it is too profitable! .

While acknowledging the many important issues on WHO's agenda, the sun-setting of one of WHO most effective and essential safeguards of children's right to health conflicts with WHO's fundamental purpose. If WHO is going to sunset its decisions, then please focus on the ones that are doing little or nothing to protect health.

We treasure our collaboration with WHO on this work so far – it has been life-saving. Please continue to value the Code, recognise these risks and warn Member States to safeguard their policy-making from inappropriate partnerships

Member States use Assemblies to share concerns and adopt Resolutions that clarify, strengthen and update the original Code and 19 Resolutions have been adopted since 1981. This shows that the Code is far from the dead issue and why baby food companies want it taken off WHO's agenda.

The 2020 joint WHO/UNICEF/IBFAN global report shows that 70% of countries analysed have some form of legal measure on the International Code, however, under pressure from industry and trade bodies, far too many laws contain dangerous loopholes or rely on the voluntary cooperation of the companies.

Thank you once more.