

Statement of the Slovak Republic
75th World Health Assembly
Item:18.1 Maternal, infant and young child nutrition
Geneva, 22 – 28 May 2022

Chair,

Slovakia aligns itself with the statement of France made on behalf of the EU and its Member States on this agenda.

Slovakia welcomes six commitments of the WHO Global Tokio Nutrition summit to accelerate progress on the 2025 nutrition targets, in particular speaking about scaling up quality breastfeeding promotion and support. Unfortunately, slow progress has been made in increasing the breastfeeding. Globally, 44% of infants under six months of age were breastfed in 2020.

One of the priorities of the Slovak National Action Plan for Obesity Prevention is to promote a healthy start in life, at as earliest stage as possible. Breastfeeding is considered the best choice for mothers, newborns and infants, providing nutritional and health benefits such as increased resistance to infections. The research has also demonstrated that breastfed children are less exposed to the risk of NCDs at later age.

At national level, Slovakia has developed a preventive guideline on the implementation of Baby friendly hospitals guided by BFHI initiative in cooperation with WHO. For the past year, exclusive breastfeeding has increased from 62% of exclusively breastfed newborns to 67%. The rooming-in system increased from 65.5% to 68%.

Slovakia would like to express its continued support and engagement when working on improving the maternal, infant and young children nutrition.

Regarding the Report on Sustaining the elimination of iodine deficiency disorders, in Slovakia, the salt iodization process started in 1946. The iodine content is monitored by the Regional Public Health Authorities. Given this measure, endemic goiter and cretinism have practically disappeared in Slovakia.

Finally, Slovakia draws the attention to the importance of further developing WHO guidelines in this field as well as sharing the best practice.

I thank you.