



13 May 2008

Her Excellency  
Dr. Margaret Chan  
Director General  
World Health Organization  
20 Avenue Appia  
Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Dr. Chan:

**RE: A Global Commitment to Action on the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health**

As the CEOs of major international food and non-alcoholic beverage companies, we would like to take this opportunity ahead of the World Health Assembly in May to set out our global commitment to further action in support of continuing efforts to implement the 2004 WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health.

We fully recognise that experts agree that significant increases in non-communicable diseases (such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension and diabetes) are directly linked to increasing prevalence of obesity resulting from a number of factors including poor diets, less physical activity and changes in lifestyle in both developed and developing countries around the world.

The WHO Strategy acknowledges that efforts to help people improve their diet and health require actions by all stakeholders – including the private sector. As companies, we take this responsibility seriously and have already taken concrete steps to:

- Reformulate our existing products and develop innovations that offer healthier options for our consumers;
- Provide our consumers with more and clearer information about the nutritional composition of their foods and beverages;
- Adopt voluntary measures on the marketing and advertising of food and beverages, particularly to children; and
- Promote greater physical activity, sports and healthier lifestyles, including in the workplace.

However, as we fast approach the fifth anniversary of the launch of the Strategy, we believe that even greater efforts will have to be made by all stakeholders if the Strategy's goals -- particularly in developing and emerging countries -- are to be achieved.

We are therefore pleased to share with you the **five** key global commitments to action that will guide our companies over the next **five** years and beyond. We will report our individual progress in delivering these annually ahead of each World Health Assembly meeting. The progress report will be published and also made available to all interested parties on a dedicated website.



### ***Commitment 1: Product Composition & Availability***

Critical to changing consumer behaviours is the availability of a range of healthier choices and dietary options. We will continue our individual efforts to reformulate products and bring to the market new products which support the goals of improving diets and reducing obesity such as lower salt (consistent with food safety requirements), free sugars, saturated fats, and trans-fatty acids in all countries in which we operate around the world. We will also continue our efforts with respect to portion control.

Secondly, we will work collaboratively with WHO, national Governments and other stakeholders to develop guidelines and strategies to help consumers reduce over time the excess intake levels of key nutrients of public health concern in the overall diet. In 2008-9, for example, we are keen to engage and support the WHO work on reducing trans-fats and salt.

Thirdly, we are also mindful of the pressing need to address nutritional (micro-nutrient) deficiencies in many developing countries. Wherever possible we will look for opportunities to develop and market products that can address the specific needs of consumers and governments in this regard (including fortified foods).

### ***Commitment 2: Nutrition Information to Consumers***

The provision of nutrition information to consumers forms the cornerstone of any policy framework to address poor dietary intakes. At a global level – or where there are no legislative requirements already in place - we will ensure that, as a minimum, our products provide nutrition information on-pack per portion for the key nutrients of public health concern. Where execution on-pack may not be possible (due to limited space or type of packaging) we will ensure that this information is provided to consumers in other forms (e.g., websites, in-store leaflets, consumer care lines, etc).

### ***Commitment 3: Marketing & Advertising to Children***

A great deal of political attention at international, regional and national levels has been focused on the question of marketing and advertising of foods and beverages to children.

The food and beverage industry, with the support of bodies like the World Federation of Advertisers, is making significant progress in both expanding and strengthening advertising self-regulatory processes globally. This process is designed to ensure codes of conduct are properly monitored, policed and enforced in a manner which reflects the best practice model agreed upon with consumer and public health groups as part of the EU Advertising Roundtable.

Additionally, the food and beverage industry strengthened its commitment to responsible advertising through the adoption in 2004 of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Framework for Responsible Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverage Advertising. This Framework was most recently updated in 2006 to cover all forms of marketing communications, including the digital media. These code provisions are currently being formally integrated into national self-regulatory codes worldwide.

Furthermore, a number of companies are supporting participants in voluntary “Pledges” in, for example, the EU, US and Canada, which are independently monitored and reported on, to change the types of foods and beverages advertised to children.

We recognise however that, where it is not already the case, we should apply our individual marketing and advertising commitments on a global basis. This year, we therefore intend to



finalize and announce plans and timetables to achieve this, together with appropriate independent mechanisms to monitor their delivery.

In our discussions, we will take into account the need to involve as many companies as possible to ensure the application of such commitments is made more widespread throughout the industry. We will continue to seek input from WHO stakeholders throughout this process and will keep you informed of our progress.

**Commitment 4: Promotion of Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles**

Wherever possible we will use our marketing communications and/or collaborate with public authorities and other stakeholders to help raise consumer awareness on balanced diets, as well as to help promote greater physical activity and healthier lifestyles – including within the workplace. Each year we will provide examples of how these campaigns are being applied in different markets around the world in order to be able to share best practice.

**Commitment 5: Partnerships**

We are acutely aware of the enormity of the task ahead and the need to work collaboratively with WHO, its regional offices, Member States and the wider public health community to deliver a positive outcome. We will commit our time, expertise and resources to support public-private partnerships to accomplish the objectives of the WHO in this area.

As we move forward with our plans, we will look to co-operate and promote this approach in all markets and encourage others (including small and medium sized companies) to follow our lead.

We look forward to meeting with you and our team in the coming months to inform you in greater detail of the progress we are making and to solicit your views.

Yours sincerely,

Ken Powell  
Chief Executive Officer  
General Mills, Inc.

David Mackay  
President and  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kellogg Company

Irene Rosenfeld  
Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer  
Kraft Foods Inc.

Paul Michaels  
President  
Mars Incorporated

Paul Bulcke  
Chief Executive Officer  
Nestlé S.A.

Indra Nooyi  
Chairman and  
Chief Executive Officer  
PepsiCo, Inc.

Mr. Muhtar Kent  
President &  
Chief Operating Officer  
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Patrick Cescau  
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