

CANADIAN DRAFT

Sustaining the elimination of Iodine Deficiency Disorders

The Fifty-eight World Health Assembly,

Having taken note of the WHO report on Iodine Status Worldwide published in December 2004;

Affirming the priority of preventing and controlling iodine deficiency evidenced in WHA resolution WHA 49.13 and WHA 52.24 and endorsed by the 2002 UN GASS resolution on sustained elimination of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD),

Concerned that IDD remains a serious public health threat in causing invisible brain damage to hundreds of millions of children as well as visible goiter, cretinism, still birth, miscarriage and physical impairment,

Noting that the global battle against IDD through the Universal Salt Iodization constitutes one of the most cost effective development efforts contributing to economical and social development,

Recognizing that the international community has made substantial progress -- two billion more people have adopted the use of iodized salt in the last decade—fully one third of the world's population still remain at risk, mostly in the poorest and economically least developed areas,

Realizing that a sustainable solution like Universal Salt Iodization is needed to ensure continuing regular intakes of trace amounts of iodine, because IDD unlike smallpox can never be eradicated and interruption of intake of micro amounts of iodine on a regular basis will allow its return,

Convinced that sustainability requires communication and education efforts to sustain the behavioral norm of using iodized salt to avoid the backsliding evidenced lacking long-term strategies,

Urges member states

1) to redouble their commitment to sustained elimination of IDD as part of their regular public health programs and anti-poverty efforts through Universal Salt Iodization,

2) to take urgent measures to reach the remaining third of the population, mostly the poorest and economically least advantaged groups,

3) to include health promotion efforts in their strategies so that the practice of using iodized salt becomes a standard practice based on awareness of the need for iodine for mental and physical well being, especially for expectant mothers and infants,

4) to establish multidisciplinary national coalitions that include salt producers and the education and media sectors, to monitor the state of iodine nutrition every three years and report to the WHA on their progress,

Requests the Director General

1) to strengthen cooperation with member states, at their request, and with international organizations including UNICEF and ICCIDD, as well as bilateral aid agencies, in providing technical assistance to regulators and salt producers in producing and marketing of iodized salt, strengthening quality control assurance systems and facilitating a network of reference laboratories for iodine estimation

2) to strengthen advocacy efforts involving public media and civil society for renewed commitments to IDD programs, including appropriate research with relevant partners

3) to report on the results in implementing this resolution to the Sixtieth session of the WHA in 2007 and every 3 years thereafter.