WHA27.43　　Infant nutrition and breast-feeding

The Twenty-seventh World Health Assembly,

Reaffirming that breast-feeding has proved to be the most appropriate and successful nutritional solution for the harmonious development of the child;

Noting the general decline in breast-feeding, related to sociocultural and environmental factors, including the mistaken idea caused by misleading sales promotion that breast-feeding is inferior to feeding with manufactured breast-milk substitutes;

Observing that this decline is one of the factors contributing to infant mortality and malnutrition, in particular in the developing world; and

Realizing that mothers who feed their babies with manufactured foods are often unable to afford an adequate supply of such foods and that even if they can afford such foods the tendency to malnutrition is frequently aggravated because of lack of understanding of the amount and correct and hygienic preparation of the food which should be given to the child,

1.   RECOMMENDS strongly the encouragement of breast-feeding as the ideal feeding in order to promote harmonious physical and mental development of children;

2.   CALLS THE ATTENTION of countries to the necessity of taking adequate social measures for mothers working away from their homes during the lactation period, such as arranging special work timetables so that they can breast-feed their children;

3.   URGES Member countries to review sales promotion activities on baby foods and to introduce appropriate remedial measures, including advertisement codes and legislation where necessary;

4.   URGES the Director-General to intensify activities relevant to the promotion of breast-feeding, to bring those matters to the notice of the medical profession and health administrators and to emphasize the need for health personnel, mothers and the general public to be educated accordingly; and

5.   REQUESTS the Director-General to promote and further support activities related to the preparation and use of weaning foods based on local products.

Fourteenth plenary meeting, 23 May 1974
(Committee A, third report)