

**THE NEED TO REVITALISE AND INCREASE SUPPORT FOR BREASTFEEDING**  
**NGO Statement for Follow-up to the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children,**  
**11-12 December 2007**

**Confirming:**

There is wide recognition that early and exclusive breastfeeding are critical early childhood strategies for increasing child survival, health, nutrition, and growth and development. This statement is supported by a significant body of scientific evidence,<sup>1,2,3</sup> and in statements of the World Health Organization,<sup>4,5</sup> UNICEF,<sup>4,5,6</sup> States Members, and others.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, it is essential that the World Fit for Children (+5) continues to support *with urgency* the need to create an enabling environment so that women may succeed in optimal infant and young child feeding and care.

**And, noting that:**

The World Fit for Children specifically states that achieving the goal of “Promoting healthy lives” includes the targets of reduced maternal and neonatal mortality, provision of appropriate, user-friendly and high-quality health-care services, adequately addressing reproductive and sexual health, reduction of disparities in child health and survival, and **protection, promotion and support of exclusive breastfeeding of infants for six months and continued breastfeeding with safe, appropriate and adequate complementary feeding up to two years of age or beyond;**

**Therefore:**

The undersigned NGOs, representing and supporting hundreds of thousands of individuals and organizations worldwide, call upon the United Nations organizations and upon all nations to continue to advance children’s rights and well-being as per the Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>8</sup> and to show their concern for children by:

- increasing and revitalising support for proven programmes, including those agreed upon in the 1990 Innocenti Declarations on the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding;<sup>9</sup>
- implementing the activities outlined in the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding<sup>4</sup> and the Innocenti +15 documents;<sup>10</sup> and,
- creating specific programming to support women worldwide in their efforts to do what is most important for the health and survival of their children through the best and most cost-effective intervention: early and exclusive breastfeeding.

Respectfully submitted by the ad hoc UN Breastfeeding Advocacy Team, representing the Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM), the International Lactation Consultants Association (ILCA), International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)-Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), IBFAN-Geneva Infant Feeding Association (GIFA), La Leche League, International (LLLI), and the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA).

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<sup>1</sup> Horta et al. Evidence on the long-term effects of breastfeeding: systematic reviews and meta-analysis, 2007

<sup>2</sup> Ip S et al. *Breastfeeding and Maternal and Infant Health Outcomes in Developed Countries*, April 2007 <http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/tp/brfouttp.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Jones G et al. How many child deaths can we prevent this year? *Lancet*. 2003 Jul 5;362(9377):65-71.

<sup>4</sup> WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding and Care, WHO, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> WHO/UNICEF/UNAIDS/UNFPA. HIV and infant feeding : new evidence and programmatic experience: report of a technical consultation held on behalf of the Inter-agency Task Team (IATT) on Prevention of HIV Infections in Pregnant Women, Mothers and their Infants, Geneva, Switzerland, 25-27 October 2006.

<sup>6</sup> UNICEF report on the newly recorded decline in child mortality credits breastfeeding as one of the primary interventions that has made a difference. [http://www.unicef.org/childsurvival/index\\_40850.html](http://www.unicef.org/childsurvival/index_40850.html)

<sup>7</sup> International Pediatrics Association, EU Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding, US Blueprint for Action on Breastfeeding, USAID Policy Statement on Breastfeeding, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 24

<sup>9</sup> WHO/UNICEF/USAID/SIDA. Innocenti Declaration on the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding. August, 1990.

<sup>10</sup> 2005 Innocenti Declaration on Infant and Young Child Feeding, <http://innocenti15.net/declaration.htm>