

Distinguished guests,

I welcome you all with respect to the Holistically Solve Food Issues Eatology Symposium with an internationally attended multidisciplinary approach held at Istanbul Medipol University.

Nutrition is an indispensable for human beings to survive, like all other living systems. Healthy eating is only possible with healthy foods. Access to healthy food is the most fundamental right of every individual.

Public health is closely related to the health of individuals who make up the society.

The two extremes of nutrition; malnutrition and obesity are important factors in today's diet and lifestyle has become the most significant threats to human health in the emergence of non-communicable diseases in the world and in Turkey.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which we face as of 2020, has significantly affected access to food and nutrition.

Access to healthy food and adequate nutrition in the world is monitored by the studies conducted by The World Health Organization, United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, and the results are evaluated periodically.

In our country, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry are responsible for the regulations related to food production, food safety, nutrition and other health-related issues. The necessary legal regulations and market surveillance are carried out to improve public health and increase the quality of life.

As a result of the cooperation of our Ministry of Health with the World Health Organization, the Multisectoral Action Plan of Turkey for Noncommunicable Diseases 2017-2025, which includes programs for the prevention and control of diseases and risk factors, was prepared. This plan includes national targets and mechanisms for the coordination of the responsible at the government level. It adopts a holistic and highly multidisciplinary approach that includes priority objectives that ensure the sustainability of disease prevention and control activities and effective intervention.

Turkey introduced the Healthy Nutrition and Active Life Programme in order to increase the knowledge of the population and the adoption of healthy habits to decrease the prevalence of obesity and obesity-related diseases such as diabetes. This report presents the findings of a qualitative evaluation by a team of international and national experts. It demonstrates notable achievements, opportunities for building on the achievements and suggestions for a programme and action plan for 2017-2021.

Excessive salt consumption is an important contributing factor for cardiovascular disease. Salt content in foods and the high average salt intake in Turkey have begun to decrease in response to a comprehensive salt reduction programme initiated by the Government. With this program, studies are carried out to reduce sodium consumption by 30%, identify major factors that cause salt consumption and excessive salt consumption in the society, and reduce this consumption in the short and long term.

Turkey diabetes program aims at reducing deaths due to diabetes with possible complications, develop the effective policies to increase the awareness of diabetes in the community, to prevent in the maximum degree possible diabetes, to ensure that people with diabetes receive adequate and appropriate education, treated, and reduced complications and deaths due to diabetes.

Again, with the prevention of adult and childhood obesity and physical activity action plan, taking measures for the diagnosis and treatment of obesity within the scope of preventive health services at national and local level, monitoring and evaluation studies are carried out.

We know that comprehensive studies are carried out in the world and in our country in order to ensure that all individuals have access to healthy food under equal conditions and to maintain a healthy diet and a quality life.

Despite all these efforts in the world, around 690 million people today go to bed hungry every night. Conflicts, which are an important factor of hunger, cause around 122 million children to have developmental disorders. 14 million children under the age of 5 suffer from severe acute malnutrition.

Improving production in agriculture and ensuring its sustainability are extremely important in terms of food safety.

In today's world, many countries in the world suffer from hunger and unfair food distribution are increasingly experiencing food and water shortages. In our country policies have been established and implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in order to use our existing agricultural resources in the best way and to produce our agricultural and food products in a safe and quality manner.

The goals and targets set by the Ministry in the 2019-2023 strategic plan aim to expand sufficient and reliable food production and to develop adequate policies for meeting the supply.

Increasing healthy food production as a result of population growth also requires good quality soil, water and air.

We have to fulfill our duties and responsibilities in order to ensure the sustainability of the total food resources in the world and leave a livable world to future generations with the awareness that human beings are not the only creatures that need to be fed in the universe.

In this sense, I hope that the symposium to be held here will be beneficial in terms of not revealing the sustainable food and healthy nutrition problems and related solutions and will contribute to the world of science, I offer my respects to all participants and wish them a good day.

Prof. Dr. Sabahattin Aydın