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Author: Pakistan

For the last decades, there has been a sharp increase in the amount of obese population all over the world. Whereas developing and even some further developed countries keep trying to fight hunger, there are countries that are experiencing the opposite problem: obesity. As a matter of fact, being obese does not mean being better or adequately nourished. In fact, obesity is often caused by vitamins and minerals deficiencies. People suffering from obesity are more likely to suffer from chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart diseases and even cancer.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is facing a difficult situation as it is being surrounded by constant terrorist attacks and armed conflicts. Moreover there are high rates of infant mortality, lack of potable water and low levels of education among other serious economic issues. Our country is aware that economic issues are harshly threatening nutrition and health awareness.

Furthermore, the mechanization of agriculture has reduced the demand for workers in rural areas, thus rural population has migrated to cities. In the majority of cases, this migration has not supposed a radical improvement in the economic and consequently life conditions of the Pakistani population, but has led to an open door and easier access to non-expensive and non-nutritional products to satisfy hunger. Therefore, these people experience vitamins and minerals deficiencies a lack of vitamins, minerals and an overdose of fat and calories which can provoke, by excess, obesity or, by deficiency, undernourishment.

In addition, we can see the cohabitation of two kinds of malnutrition in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, because not only are we talking about obesity caused by economic issues, but we also have the opposite case: the rich population that enjoys a lifestyle that contrasts with the one we have explained. This minority of rich population often maintains a luxurious but sedentary lifestyle. And what is more, health awareness is still inexistent even in the most privileged social layers.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is harshly threatened by undernourishment and excessive thinness more than obesity, but it is still an issue in development and it is concerning more and more people each day. Contrarily to some countries as China or The United States that are highly concerned by this health issue, in our country it does not threaten a majority of our population, and we believe that we are in an easier position to fight and prevent obesity. However, the importance of health education and a healthy lifestyle should be spread in all of the countries that struggle to have a healthy population whether we are talking about obesity or undernourishment. All countries should have enough resources and the means to build together a solid system of health education for all the citizens regardless of their economic situation or social background.

Our country believes that the economical international community, has the means and the obligation to demonstrate determination and awareness regarding health issues, and to support the fundamental values according to human rights. Our government needs a better mobilization of resources and implication on social and health issues. However, businesses can and should play a big role as well in this fight. A demand of additional taxes to businesses that produce a certain type of products could efficiently become a way to support this system of education that sustains the promotion of good habits when it comes to food and even provide resources to increase the production in agriculture and of healthy food. In addition, we have the chance to be able to rely on the support and the collaboration of organizations such as the WHO (World Health Organization) among others that are undoubtedly making our fight more efficient. In this way, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan aims to fight malnutrition whether caused by excess or by deficiency and to contribute to the creation and promotion not only in our country but all over the world of a system of health education to which all the population can have access.