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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Food and Drink Industries Highlight Action, Encouraging Results in Fight Against Obesity**

Members of the Confederation of the Food & Drink Industries of the EU on Friday presented encouraging evidence that companies are beginning to deliver results in the fight against obesity.

"The food and drink industries understand the challenge and they are already delivering on a wide range of industry commitments," said Daniela Israelachwili, Director General of the CIAA. These include promoting healthier diets, improving marketing practices and encouraging physical activity both in the context of the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health and more generally."

Her comments came as experts from the European Union and United States, including representatives from government, academia, non-governmental organisations and food and drink manufacturers, met in Brussels on 11 and 12 May to share recent scientific findings and best-practice case studies from both Europe and the United States.

"We salute this initiative to share information and learn from experiences and best practices on both sides of the Atlantic," she said. "As is evident through the wealth of examples of best practice submitted to the EU Platform, some of which were presented at the conference, the food and drink industries are acting constructively on important issues such as product reformulation and innovation, consumer information and responsible advertising and marketing practices."

"There are some common principles on which we can all agree," Ms. Israelachwili added, "including the need to focus attention on calories as opposed to specific food categories, to recognise the importance commercial communications can play in promoting healthier living and to encourage physical activity. We are confident we can meet the challenges ahead."

"Nonetheless," she said, "we should be cautious in assuming that common solutions - especially of a regulatory nature - are necessarily appropriate. Consumers are different around the world, and the approaches to combating obesity should be, too," Ms. Israelachwili said.

CIAA stressed the importance of a multi-factorial approach to match the multi-factorial nature of the obesity problem, and the need to give self-regulation time to work.

"This is an exciting time to be in the food and drink industry, which is undergoing rapid change in terms of both product reformulation and the introduction of new products that respond to new consumer demands," she said. "The EU Platform demonstrates that self-regulation works, delivering results much faster than regulation. Obesity can't be defeated overnight, however, and we encourage regulators to give change a chance before pre-empting success with new rules and regulations."

Summaries of industry presentations that address how industry is creating local solutions to local markets are available on request.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

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CIAA is the voice of the European food and drink industry – largest manufacturing sector, major employer and exporter in the EU. CIAA's mission is to represent the food and drink industries' interests, at the level of European and international institutions, in order to contribute to the development of a legislative and economic framework addressing the competitiveness of industry, food quality and safety, consumer protection and respect for the environment. CIAA membership is made up of 24 national federations, including 2 observers, 32 European sector associations and 22 major food and drink companies.