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Pepsico and Nestle are incorporated to Crusade Against Hunger

MEXICO, DF (Ap). - Incorporating companies Nestle and PepsiCo into the Crusade Against Hunger, promoted by President Enrique Pena Nieto, gives evidence that "*Mexico is sold to multinational companies,"* said Patti Rundall, one of the leaders of the international Conflict of Interest Coalition. Worse, allowing these companies to collaborate in the design and implementation of public policy represents a "risk" to the health of people.

"They are only interested in expanding market share, even if they say they are concerned about health and to help the government. That's a lie," said the activist at a press conference.

Rundall reminded that this scheme has already been implemented in other countries such as Brazil, but it was discontinued due to protests by social organizations who denounced the harm caused to children of consumption Nestlé products with their high content of sugar and salt .

In Brazil, the Zero Hunger programme was introduced under President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Nestlé participated in programs and reported that women be responsible for nutritional guidelines. Instead of inculcating good eating habits, products became promoters of the company.

"Companies selling foods high in sugar, fat, additives and other ingredients harmful to health, want to change traditional food patterns. So why think that the solution is in these business and not people? " explained Rundall.

Hunger, she added, should not be ended and alleviated by junk food. We felt that its important to inform people and act accordingly.

As in the case of Brazil, the director of the NGO also Baby Milk Action said that Mexico could avoid the same thing happening by stopping the intrusion of companies, which also represent a conflict of interest.

Meanwhile, Alejandro Calvillo, director of Consumer Power, asked how the Crusade Against Hunger could start without its actions being evaluated by a scientific committee and that there should be no rush to formalize the agreement with the food and beverage industry.

Not to mention that the companies involved in the project, PepsiCo and Nestle, represent a conflict of interest because "you can not make public policy with the main industry causing obesity."

Calvillo inferred that if, as in Brazil, the private sector put up for sale their products in DICONSA, 25 000 distributors, instead of hunger there would be increased obesity, and related diseases, such as hypertension and diabetes.

Alvaro Urreta Fernandez, President of the Union of Producers and small merchants said the inclusion of companies in the stellar program of the Ministry of Social Development (SEDESOL) would be the beginning of the destruction of the nutritional traditions and livelihoods of many families.

Already there has been a decrease in the purchase of agricultural products (fruits and vegetables) as well as a shift in food consumption, because the supermarket, with its dealers, destroy popular markets and shopping districts.

The experts felt that the emphasis should be on the awareness of the public about what they consume, and to require the State to disclose the assets of each of those involved in the Crusade Against Hunger, in order to avoid working with persons or companies who may hinder the social program.