Dear Miles D. White, Emmanuel Faber, Hein Schumacher, Bernardo Hees, Ulf Mark Schneider and Rakesh Kapoor,

As organizations committed to improving the health and nutrition of women and children throughout the world and protecting the public interest, we are writing to call on your companies to fully comply with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent resolutions (the Code). In light of the recent media reports of the United States Administration’s attempts to undermine the infant and young child feeding resolution at the World Health Assembly and the ensuing public outcry, we have become even more concerned about the infant formula industry’s practices and the continued unethical and irresponsible marketing of breast milk substitutes.
Your companies consistently fail to comply with the Code, which was adopted by the World Health Organization during its 1981 World Health Assembly—the highest health policy setting body in the world. As you know, the Code applies to all countries in the world, and works to protect all children from birth up to 36 months. As shown by the recent Access to Nutrition Index report, your companies’ marketing of infant formula and other breastmilk substitutes continues to violate both the letter and spirit of the Code which exists to protect breastfeeding—a practice vital to the health and survival of mothers and children across the globe.

Specifically, we ask that each of your companies: (1) Publicly commit to upholding the Code and its subsequent resolutions and recognize that the Code applies to all countries; and (2) Immediately cease from lobbying or using other means to undermine global efforts to protect breastfeeding and countries’ efforts to enact, implement, monitor or enforce national Code legislation and regulations.

We stand ready to mobilize our supporters to join us in urging you to commit to full compliance with the Code and to desist from lobbying to undermine the protection of breastfeeding which has the potential to save over 800,000 lives of young children every year. Each of you is in a position to lead the industry in making big strides towards Code compliance by taking the steps that we have outlined above. With this letter, we invite you to reply with a plan for addressing your companies’ longstanding failure to comply with the Code. Please direct your responses to Lucy M. Sullivan, Executive Director of 1,000 Days.

Sincerely,

1,000 Days
Alive & Thrive
American Academy of Nursing
American Breastfeeding Institute
Bread for the World
Bright Future Lactation Resource Center
Child Health Advocacy Initiative
Clean Label Project
Concern Worldwide
FHI 360
Global Health Advocates
Helen Keller International
National WIC Association
Public Citizen
RESULTS
Save the Children UK
University of Connecticut Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity
Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America