“Junk food” should attract additional taxes, says the report from the United Nations Organization.

Such a "sin tax" should be introduced for all kinds of snacks, sodas and hamburgers in all parts of the world to help the estimated billion people who suffer from undernourishment, as well as another billion who remain overweight or obese, the UN insists.

“Urbanization, ‘supermarketization’, and the global spread of Western lifestyles have shaken up traditional food habits. The result is a public health disaster,” said Olivier De Schutter, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, as he presented his latest report to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

A 10% tax on non-alcoholic drinks that undermine health would result in an 8%-10% cut in their consumption, the UN report calculates. The revenues from those payments could be used to promote fruit and vegetables, while advertisements for harmful products could be ceased all together, the organization suggests.

The idea of a tax for junk food has already been realized in several US states, with the fans of chips and hamburgers being charged extra across the whole country. In Europe, Denmark was a pioneer, with fattening fast foods falling victim to an additional €2.15 surcharge in autumn last year.

Finland followed suit shortly afterwards, charging lovers of chocolate and cola. And Hungary, where the number of fat people is one of the highest in Europe, also introduced a so- called “tax on chips” back in 2011. Tax revenues there are spent on healthcare.

In France sweet non-alcoholic drinks have been taxed since the beginning of 2012. The move is expected to reap around €280 million annually.

Though creating extra budget revenues, the overall economic effect of the move remains complex. In Hungary, for example, the "tax on chips" cut revenues of medium and huge producers of “junk food” by almost 30%, says the Federation of Hungarian Food Industries, FOSZ. Also, some international food producers decided to invest elsewhere, with Chio, a global chips producer, redirecting its money to France, RBC says.

On a positive note, the “tax on chips” is expected to bring additional €100 million to the Hungary’s budget.
Burger burden: UN proposes junk food tax — RT