Item 3 Annual Report of the Executive Director of UNICEF

President,

Allow me first to thank the Executive Director for the introductory statement and Mr. O’Malley for presenting the Annual Report. UNICEF’s work in development and in humanitarian action is of great importance and value not only for Norway as a donor, but most importantly, for the children whose human rights are not respected and whose basic needs are not met.

President,

The Millennium Development Goals have set a standard for the protection of children. Concrete, targeted efforts to reach the goals have benefited millions of children. Partnerships between countries, multilateral institutions and civil society have been crucial for the progress attained. In the context of shaping the Post-2015 Development agenda, the United Nations is currently discussing how we can make development efforts reach even more girls, boys, women and men. The new development agenda must include universal goals to benefit children and protect their human rights. The right to basic health care and education for every child must be at the core of the sustainable future we aim to create. It is therefore critical that the post-2015 development agenda not only takes on the unfinished business from the MDGs, but goes further in setting even more ambitious goals on behalf of our children.

The rights of children must be protected regardless of the child’s gender, social background or abilities – The Convention of the Rights of the Child is clear that all children have the same rights. UNICEF’s protection mandate is key to Norway. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is another important convention for children, and therefore highly relevant to UNICEF’s work. Rights will not be fully protected unless we work to implement the human rights instruments. We expect UNICEF to support countries in implementing the recommendations of the Treaty Bodies, in particular those made by the Committee of the Rights of the Child and the Universal Periodic Reviews of the Human Rights Council. The
protection mandate of UNICEF applies not only to its development activities, but also to UNICEF’s work in the humanitarian field.

President,

The annual report presents many examples of UNICEF’s important work. It is crucial for Norway that UNICEF clearly documents its contribution to results and improvements for children. We therefore encourage UNICEF to continue to improve the reporting on results, including in the last Annual Report of the current MTSP, in line with what the Executive Board previously has requested. A more active use of evaluations could also improve the reporting on results.

We appreciate that gender mainstreaming was an important focus of UNICEF’s programming in 2012. However, we do not see this priority sufficiently reflected in the report. In light of this, we would welcome documented results on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women. The new Strategic Priority Action Plan for Gender should, together with a strong strategic plan and accompanied by a clear results framework, ensure that future reporting clearly states what has been achieved for boys and girls on the ground as a result of UNICEF’s work. Through the gender marker and other tools available, we believe that this should now be achievable.

In future reports, the impact of UNICEF’s human rights-based approach would also merit a more comprehensive and consistent elaboration.

The Annual Report gives an overview of several aspects of the important work UNICEF carries out both as a humanitarian actor and through its development activities. We look forward to further discussing the linkages between these areas of work tomorrow and through the process of finalizing the draft strategic plan. We would also welcome an analysis in the Strategic Plan of UNICEF’s role and value added in the humanitarian field.

President,

Let me conclude with two lessons learnt on results reporting from the present MTSP period as we see it:

First, a strong results framework is a prerequisite for systematic and aggregated reporting on results.

Second, reporting would benefit from a clear distinction between two important tasks vested in UNICEF; notably the global role in advocacy, research and
monitoring of children’s situation on the one hand and the role as development and humanitarian actor at country level on the other.

Thank you.