Mr President, Mr Lake, distinguished delegates.

As the Chair of the Standing Group, it is my honour to speak on behalf of the 36 National Committees for UNICEF. I would like to begin by thanking my colleagues in PFP for their partnership and collaboration and thanking the Executive Director for his constant support for the National Committee family during the past year. We are eager to contribute to UNICEF’s new Strategic Plan, and are very grateful for the many opportunities for dialogue with UNICEF colleagues during the development of the Plan. In particular, we stand ready to contribute to the ambitious revenue goals that have been developed as part of the Private Fundraising and Partnerships Plan that has just been finalized.

Since 1947, National Committees have wholeheartedly been uniting for children and supporting UNICEF’s mission. As thirty six independent organizations, united by a common desire to improve the world for children, we represent over 1.1 billion people in the world, and together, we have raised over US$ 12 billion dollars for UNICEF while advocating for the rights of children everywhere. On
average, National Committees have been responsible for a third of UNICEF’s income.

We recognize the urgency to support the many humanitarian emergencies that have affected children and families this year. In particular, we appreciate the partnership with colleagues at PFP and DOC to raise awareness and funds for UNICEF’s response in Syria and the region. We have drawn on our expertise in social media, our celebrity ambassadors and used our connections in media to raise the profile of this emergency.

We are committed to performing our work in the most efficient and effective way possible. Following the release of UNICEF’s audit report last year, we have continued to implement rigorous measures to improve our collective performance and results for children. One of the immediate results of our efforts is reflected in an increase in our contribution rate. This rate rose from 71.3% in 2011 to 72.3% in 2012. We achieved this increase in performance despite difficult economic times and an on-going transition from one of our most traditional sources of funds, Cards and Products, to other fundraising strategies.

Mr President,

The National Committee family is committed to leverage our collective talents and lead the transition to ever more creative and innovative messaging for children. Not only are we familiar with the benefits of social networks, but we are leading the way in connecting the citizens of the world with the realities of children in need. Allow me to share some of these successes.

In 2012, National Committee’s websites were visited over 29 million times. This is an increase of 24% from 2011. Together, we count 3.3 million social media
followers: that’s 118% more than in 2011. On Facebook only, we have 1,425,000 subscribers.

What do these numbers mean? They are testament of our enormous potential to lead the digital revolution, to harness the power of social connectivity around a common cause, the rights of children. Because of our reach, we can have faith that no child will be left behind, we can make emergencies visible and we can bring the realities of children suffering all over the world close to home.

National Committees are currently linking our individual Joint Strategic Plans to the UNICEF Strategic Plan in consultation with our PFP colleagues. We will invest according to guidelines in our individual Cooperation Agreements, allocating 5% of our gross proceeds for advocacy as we continue to focus on equity, social inclusion, child protection and child rights education for every child around the world.

For this purpose, we look forward to continuing our collaboration with our PARMO colleagues through the implementation of the One-Country Approach principles, and also with the Department of Communications through the implementation of the Private Sector Communication Framework, as we believe that a strong communication strategy will drive public awareness and support resource mobilization.

Finally, Mr President,

National Committees have a crucial mandate in an imperfect world: to advocate and provide the resources that will shelter children from poverty, disasters and conflict. We do so with great pride and determination.
Under Mr Lake’s leadership and the support we have from our colleagues at PFP, we are driven by our shared passion to ensure that children are able to fulfil their potential and live in a better, safer, more just and sustainable world, in the present, and in the future which they will inherit. We believe that this world can and must be achieved. And National Committees will continue to fight the good fight alongside our UNICEF partners in this pursuit.

Thank you again.