Good morning. And a very warm welcome to our new Bureau…our new President, Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen…and our Vice Presidents: Ambassador Ferit Hoxha…Ambassador George Wilfred Talbot…and Ambassador Mohammad Khazaee. I’m grateful that Ambassador Macharia Kamau is returning as Vice President.

In the spirit of welcoming new faces, and at the same time old friends, it is my pleasure today to welcome World Bank Group President, Dr. Jim Yong Kim.

I know the members of the Board and my colleagues in UNICEF join me in welcoming you warmly. As recently as our last meeting in September, the Board expressed an interest in learning more about our partnerships with the IFIs. So we are delighted that you accepted our invitation -- but we are not surprised you did so. Because doing so is a gesture very much in line with the spirit of cooperative leadership that you have brought to the World Bank.

This is an exciting time for all of us…the World Bank…UNICEF…and our partners…to work…to innovate…and to achieve results for children in greatest need, together.

We very much look forward to hearing from Dr. Kim shortly. But first, let me update you on a few highlights of our progress since our last meeting.

As always, I’ll start by noting some changes in UNICEF’s senior staff -- first welcoming two more women to our Senior Management Team.

Fatoumata Ndiaye took up her new appointment as Director, Office of Internal Audit and Investigations in early January, after a noteworthy career with the UN and in the private sector. Most recently, as Director, Internal Audit Division, Office of Internal Oversight
Services at the UN Secretariat, Fatoumata led a division that upholds the highest standards of integrity, transparency, accountability and professionalism – and, I know, will do so again here at UNICEF.

And in April, Paloma Escudero will become our new Director of the Division of Communication. As Executive Director of the Spanish National Committee, Paloma led the transformation of the Committee into a highly efficient organization and the leading voice for the rights of children in Spain. Previously, Paloma served in senior positions with Oxfam International and Procter and Gamble. I know UNICEF will benefit from Paloma’s extraordinary energy and high competence, as well as the rich experience she brings in communications, fund-raising and advocacy.

You already know two colleagues assuming other important positions.

Elhadj As Sy will join us in April as our new Director of the Public Sector Alliances and Resource Mobilisation Office. You know him for his steady and strong leadership in the Eastern and Southern Africa region – not the least of which was his steering of UNICEF’s response to the crisis in the Horn of Africa. His thorough and thoughtful understanding of UNICEF’s programme priorities and funding needs will serve UNICEF well here in New York. I have relied on his advice about ESARO and look forward to drawing on his high intelligence and experience.

Another well-known face, David Gressly, presently our Regional Director, West and Central Africa, will replace As as Regional Director, Eastern and Southern Africa region. You may remember that in April, David was appointed as the Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel, ad interim, and led the UN system response to the combined Mali and food and nutrition crises in the Sahel. In December 2012, he was commended for his efforts by the UN Security Council. I am glad to be welcoming David back to UNICEF in this critical position, also in April.

Let me thank June Kunugi, Manuel Fontaine and Edward Carwardine for their strong and continuing leadership of PARMO, WCARO and DOC through these transitions.
We have also launched our annual senior staff rotation and reassignment exercise with an eye, of course, to gender and geographic balance. We are particularly working on how to attract our best people to work in emergencies and how to reward their service in their future careers.

Please join me in congratulating colleagues on their new roles and in extending a heartfelt thank you to those who are retiring.

This is also a good opportunity for me to acknowledge the contributions of all staff at UNICEF. Talented and dedicated, I am ever more proud to work with them every day. I especially want to recognise the thousands of courageous individuals who are working in the most dangerous circumstances and risking their lives daily to support the lives of women and children in need. And let me particularly recall our UN colleagues in Pakistan who mourn the loss of polio workers there to a vile campaign against them. Despite the losses and dangers, we will defeat polio and we will help bring the miracle of vaccines to the fifth child – the twenty per cent or so of the world’s children who do not yet enjoy their life-saving benefits.

On Friday, we will celebrate the contributions of UNICEF staff through the annual Staff Awards which we are, rightfully, reintroducing.

All of our staff work, every day, with a sense of great urgency. How can there be a greater demand for urgency than in emergencies - in Syria, in Mali, in Yemen, in Afghanistan and in Somalia and… I could, unhappily, go on and on. Emergencies rightly require our increasing attention and resources as children lose their childhoods to conflicts and other disasters… even lose their very futures.

And around the world, the New Year reminds us that there are only some 1,000 days left before the 2015 MDG deadline.

There is much progress to celebrate. More children surviving and thriving. Narrower gaps in primary school enrolment between girls and boys. More children with access to clean drinking water and sanitation.
But we are all here know how much there is left to do…by 2015 and beyond. And
that the march of progress has left too many behind: those who had the least to start
with…the most disadvantaged and excluded children, those whose rights are most denied.

So, we must make 2013 count for them. To help deliver on the promises the world
collectively made in 1990, in 2000 and in 2002 to the rights of all children, everywhere.

That is why we are helping translate this commitment into action through *A Promise
Renewed* – a global movement to accelerate action and results in reducing under five
mortality in support of national priorities and the Secretary General’s Every Woman, Every
Child initiative.

Momentum continues to build. As you know, APR was launched last June at the Call
to Action conference, led by the Governments of Ethiopia, India and the United States, with
our support. Since then, 172 governments and over 400 civil society and faith-based
organizations have joined in common cause to accelerate declines in preventable child deaths.
We have established a Secretariat to help co-ordinate the movement and its networks.

Last month, Ethiopia convened the African Leadership for Child Survival meeting, a
catalytic forum attended by more than 20 delegations from African Ministries of Health,
including 12 at ministerial level, as well as global health experts. Countries committed to
sharpen national health plans and set national, measurable milestones in accelerating declines
in preventable child deaths.

India will also host a key meeting later this week, bringing together national
policymakers, the private sector and civil society to identify strategies for tackling under-five
mortality.

While APR is focused on under-five mortality, and thus primarily on health, we are
addressing the issue broadly, including education, especially girls’ education…
HIV/AIDS….WASH…and nutrition.
The focus of the movement is on the only way to keep our promise to children – through results.

That was the spirit in which the Secretary General, last March, established the UN Commission on Lifesaving Commodities for Women and Children. Led by Prime Minister Stoltenberg of Norway and President Jonathan of Nigeria, and supported by UNICEF and UNFPA, the Commission has already achieved much.

In October, President Jonathan hosted a Commission meeting at which he launched Saving One Million Lives, an ambitious initiative to scale up access to essential primary health services and commodities for Nigeria's women and children, with a focus on such commodities as oral rehydration salts and zinc to treat diarrhoea, as well as antibiotics to tackle pneumonia -- two of the biggest killers of children in Nigeria, and the world.

Inspired by Nigeria's leadership, seven additional African leaders pledged to implement the recommendations of the Commission in their own countries. Already, they are identifying key, cost-effective and catalytic interventions that will rapidly improve access to needed commodities. Funds raised by the Commodities Commission will support these plans.

The same sense of urgency behind these initiatives is driving the battle against HIV/AIDS.

On Thursday, Craig McClure will lead a session on the UNAIDS Report. Here’s the headline: an AIDS free generation is finally within reach. We can virtually eliminate mother-to-child transmission by 2015. Quite a headline. In the last ten years, the world has almost halved the numbers of new infections in children...with a 40 per cent drop in new HIV infections in children between 2006 and 2011 alone. All through a broad alliance of governments, international agencies, NGOs and the private sector.

UNICEF is championing innovative technologies and approaches to help finish the job. This includes giving communities the means to monitor and report on the quality of services they receive. And helping countries shift to offering a three-drug regimen in one pill daily to all pregnant women living with HIV -- to protect their own health...and to protect their babies and their partners from HIV infection.
Reporting on results is, of course, a key to progress on these and all our programmes. And I am happy to report that one of our contributions to these and other global efforts, MoRES – our Monitoring Results for Equity System – is increasingly being adopted by our UN partners in the field… and becoming ever more valued by government partners.

We are working closely with Helen Clark, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to encourage other UN agencies to adapt and adopt this tool at the global level. UNFPA has expressed interest. As we have previously discussed, a common UN platform for measuring, monitoring and reporting results can be a great contribution to Delivering As One.

Complementing MoRES and further accelerating progress for children is our new data analysis tool, MODA, the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis. Developed by the Office of Research in collaboration with the Division of Policy and Strategy, it helps to identify, locate and thus reach children who suffer multiple disadvantages. This analysis is important because the most disadvantaged children are often, but not always, the poorest. Disaggregated data of this kind will help us increase the chances that girls…children with disabilities… nomadic children…and those in fragile areas can better access quality education, healthcare, protection and water and sanitation.

And as we discussed at the Board session this time last year, innovations are crucial in reaching the most disadvantaged. Much of that discussion was about innovation in our work in the health sector.

This year, we will give new attention to exploring how technology can increase access to education for out-of-school children as well as improve the quality of their education. We want to see how innovations can encourage a move away from rote learning to interactive teaching and learning, and to critical thinking. Over the next months, we will be working with education experts, innovators and venture capitalists to identify and test five or six innovations in the field, leading, we hope, to a broader meeting on the subject in the autumn.
Innovations in child protection will also receive particular attention -- for example, in adapting RapidSMS to help register births. Originally built in Ethiopia and Malawi, this open-source RapidSMS application was further developed in Uganda’s Innovation Lab. It was later amended for Nigeria by young Nigerian programmers, hired by the Ministry of Health. Workers in clinics and hospitals there can now share information on new births in real-time with the national government. In the last 15 months, over seven million young people in Nigeria have been registered.

This is a case not only of innovation, of course, but also of the benefits of the growing emphasis on South-South and Triangular co-operation -- which we discussed yesterday at our Joint Meeting of the Boards.

We will be looking at innovative ways to promote more virtual South-South co-operation as an important way of making it more cost-effective. UNDP has long been a pioneer in developing virtual platforms. UNDP’s “Teamworks” is a good example.

The World Bank, already a leader in this field, also has a huge role to play in accelerating these efforts. We look forward to working with both organisations to facilitate and support this very important and growing part of the development landscape.

The urgency with which we must work this year on emergencies…on extending APR and commodities…on innovating in education and protection and HIV/AIDS…and in so many other areas can only be translated into results if we become ever more efficient, cost-effective and transparent.

In the interest of time, because I look forward to our discussion with Dr. Kim, let me touch on some high points in this regard.

• We are, for example, implementing further reductions in Headquarters budgets, focussing especially on travel and consultancies, saving some $2.3 million.

• Led by Martin Mogwanja, we have initiated a broad review of our transactions, processes and functions in order to improve our future efficiency and effectiveness. In consultation
with all staff, we are gathering evidence, in a transparent way, to inform what I hope will be major reforms to simplify our work processes and make our organisational structures more cost effective.

- Our unsung – or undersung – Supply Division continues to become more efficient. On our website you will find a recent article describing how improvements in the supply chain cut the costs of providing Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods by 27 per cent, saving $14.2 million, during the 2011 response to the Horn of Africa crisis.

As we work to get better, in what we do and how we do it, our internal and external audits and evaluations are crucial.

I am pleased – and relieved – to report that our posting of our internal audits on our website is going smoothly… that we received an “unqualified audit” from our external auditors… and that the recent assessment of UNICEF from the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) found significant improvements.

But while we welcome approval in some areas of our work, we learn more from observations in these and other assessments about areas in which we need to improve more – for example, in reporting on results. A high priority for us.

That is why I particularly look forward to our discussion this week of evaluations… on how we can continue to improve not only their quality but our follow-ups. And also of their substance. For example, your comments on Early Childhood Development will be especially valuable. Increasingly, science shows the permanent effects of deprivations in the early years… such as a lack of nutrition… a lack of stimulation on the development of the brain… abuse. So we are sharpening our focus on Early Childhood Development, in all its dimensions.

I have spoken of 2013 as a year of urgent action. But the greater the sense of urgency, the greater the need for the discipline of strategic frameworks, lest our actions become more frenetic than fruitful.
Thus 2013 will be especially important as we develop the guidance of the Medium Term Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 and, with our UN partners, operationalize the 2013-2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

We very much welcome the QCPR resolution and particularly its emphasis on delivering and demonstrating results, simplification and harmonization of business practices, and streamlining such programming processes as the UNDAF, in order to reduce transaction costs.

We are working in the UNDG to help develop a common Action Plan to implement the QCPR. Last week, we agreed to redouble our collective efforts to adopt lighter, more efficient and effective programming and business practices. And we focused on the crucial issue of how to share the costs of the RC system.

Our next MTSP will take into account the recommendations of the QCPR resolution. This will enable us to monitor the implementation of the MTSP and QCPR in a simplified and integrated manner.

As you know, we have consulted very closely with you on the MTSP process and benefitted greatly from it. We look forward to working with you as we finalize the new MTSP, to be presented at our June meeting… and adopted in September.

In focusing on the most disadvantaged and excluded children, the next MTSP will also reflect, to the extent possible at this point, the important discussions under way on the post 2015 agenda. We believe that it should emphasize equity and investments in the social sector, for the sake of children and thus the future of their societies. To have public resonance and bite, the post 2015 agenda should be simple and clear, with measurable goals.

A final word before turning to the discussion of our partnership with the World Bank. As in all our meetings, I want to emphasise the crucial problem of core resources.

First, the good news. Last year, we did relatively well in overall resources. Despite these hard times, preliminary data shows that our revenue increased by three per cent. We
could not appreciate more this tangible vote of confidence in the work of our colleagues in the field - and the work of all UNICEF to realize the rights of children.

But we urge that Member States reverse the continuing trend of declining core resources. Current data show that governments contributed $597 million to UNICEF’s core resources in 2012 -- a notable decrease of over seven per cent from the $646 million received in 2011. Core resources are essential if we are to invest in underfunded but important countries and sectors, support innovations, and respond quickly to what will undoubtedly be new emergencies.

And now to the discussion of the extraordinary opportunity we have, with Dr. Kim’s new leadership at the World Bank, to accelerate our drive for results and progress towards the 2015 deadline and beyond through our partnership with that institution.

I say ‘opportunity’ because of his and the Bank’s commitment to issues of equity, health, education and the best interests of children. And how such investments are crucial to breaking the crippling cycles of poverty that so affect children in disadvantaged communities across the world.

Such as children in Liberia…who now have access to safer water thanks to the Sanitation and Water for All partnership…where both our organisations work with the government to map and develop drinking water infrastructure using SMS technology and spatial mapping software.

Or children in Nigeria and Pakistan…who have received over two billion doses of polio vaccine in the last ten years, thanks to our joint support of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. Through an innovative ‘debt buy-down’ mechanism, the World Bank was able to help Nigeria and Pakistan procure $400 million worth of polio vaccines through UNICEF.

Or the more than 700,000 children in Ghana who, between 2003 and 2006, enrolled in school… thanks partly to analytical work by the Bank and UNICEF on the School Fee Abolition Initiative.
The principles of co-operation that have produced such progress can accelerate it in the future.

The principle of innovation… repurposing existing technology to help reach the hardest to reach. For example, in Uganda, the Bank’s Mapping for Results initiative is critical to efforts to better understand the range, location and impact of development work. UNICEF’s U-Report is integral to that effort. In just one year, U-report, our free SMS service which enables people to voice their opinions on issues such as health, gender, and education, has received almost two million text messages from U-reporters, giving government insights into what services are working… what needs improving… and what citizens need.

Or the principle of capacity building or “accompaniment”, as promoted so strongly by Dr. Kim’s and my friend, Paul Farmer. By always offering practical support to a society, its institutions and its citizens, on their path, we both reduce dependence on outside aid and respect their sovereignty. For example, the World Bank, UNICEF and others are supporting Kore Fanmi, Creole for ‘Family Support’. It is a network of local NGOs and community workers that identifies who and where the most vulnerable are and connects them to essential services -- in health, nutrition, education and protection -- and to essential commodities, such as mosquito nets and micronutrients. As it does so, it strengthens the households’ capacity to access and government’s ability to deliver quality services.

Or third, the principle of working with governments to build development not only through nation-wide approaches but also through engaging communities in identifying and addressing local priorities. An example is our collaboration in supporting the Ethiopian Government’s Health Extension Programme. The results are impressive. Some 34,000 health extension workers have been trained and deployed to rural areas…over 15,000 health posts have been set up…and more than nine million households have benefitted. This expansive network of health extension workers enabled Ethiopia to cope relatively well with the consequences of the regional food security crisis in 2011.

And fourth, our common foundation in results-based programming, monitoring and reporting… which led us, ten years ago, to jointly develop tools such as Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks (MBB). A results-based approach is integral to UNICEF’s MoRES, as well as to the World Bank’s Programme-for-Results instrument.
Let me welcome you again, Dr. Kim, on behalf of UNICEF and the Board. Your career exemplifies the importance of translating principles into practice, resources into results. We could not be more enthusiastic about seeing our two institutions do so, all the more, together.

[22 minutes]

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