Statement of Switzerland (joined by Australia, Canada, Germany and New Zealand)

UNICEF Executive Board First Regular Session 2013

Item 6: Updated roadmap to and outline of the medium-term strategic plan 2014 – 2017

February 5, 2013

Mr President

Mr Executive Director

Members of the Executive Board

I read this statement on behalf of Australia, Canada, Germany, New Zealand and my own country Switzerland.

We would like to thank UNICEF for submitting an up-dated version of the roadmap and the outline for the medium-term strategic plan 2014 to 2017. It of utmost importance to all of us to be closely involved in the establishment of the new strategic plan. Therefore, we highly appreciate the opportunity to come up with a few comments on the outline of this strategic plan.

We welcome the fact that the paper starts with an overview of the global developments and the related challenges which are already and will be of even greater relevance over the next couple of years. Effects of climate change or the close interplay between conflict and development will have an impact on many efforts UNICEF and so many other actors are doing in pursuing their mandates. We highly appreciate UNICEF’s approach to meet this challenge with refined or innovative approaches and hence invest in new technologies.

Mr President

Let me shortly point out a few specific areas which we consider to be crucial to keep in mind for the work to be done in the weeks and months to come:

During the joint board on Monday we agreed without controversy on the importance of the QCPR and the even greater importance of its follow-up and implementation. The new MTSP is a great opportunity to walk the talk and to take up the guidance
given by the QCPR. The Executive Director expressed during the joint meeting on Monday UNICEF’s strong commitment to a strengthened RC-system. We expect the mandates addressing crucial areas - such as DaO / harmonization of business practices or funding to name just a few - to be fully reflected and integrated into the new strategic plan.

When it comes to the proposed thematic components of the new MTSP, we call for a strong focus reflecting UNICEF’s core mandate and value added. Dispersion has to be avoided by all means in order to remain effective and complementary in regards with other UN-agencies.

UNICEF has always been a lead player in the area of child protection. This area is not only of utmost relevance related to UNICEF’s overall mandate but allows UNICEF to play a specific role by linking development activities with humanitarian action. This value added should be build upon and not get lost.

While emphasizing that UNICEF’s key mandate is development, we would like to point out that the new MTSP offers a great opportunity to reinforce the agency’s longstanding experience in the area of humanitarian action which has to be reflected accordingly. At the same time, it is important to reassure that UNICEF’s overall activities are shaped by close interaction and cooperation with other important humanitarian stakeholders from inside and outside the UN-System in order to avoid costly overlaps.

Another thematic area I would like to mention is policy advocacy. The report on the end-of-cycle review, which we have just discussed, comes up with the conclusion that a lot has been done but further efforts are needed to set the issue of child well-being and child rights on the political agenda. Having this in mind, we expect this area to be reflected accordingly in the new MTSP.

We are eager to get more information on how UNICEF plans to tackle these issues within the proposed seven focus areas.

To conclude with, be assured, Mr President, that Switzerland and all the countries joining this statement – Australia, Canada, Germany and New Zealand - stand ready to support the elaboration of the MTSP and to contribute in a constructive manner. We welcome a process which is transparent and responsive to inputs and feedbacks from all relevant stakeholders.

I thank you for your attention.