Statement by Finland

Mr. President, Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake,

Finland appreciates the work done so far by UNICEF in developing the next MTSP and this opportunity for an initial discussion on the draft outline. All in all, the strategic direction provided in the draft outline seems sensible, and we look forward to a more concrete version with a results framework and necessary financial and human resources, divided between different focus areas and between humanitarian and development work.

I would like to highlight the following five key points that we find particularly important in preparing the next MTSP: 1) equity and human rights based approach to programming; 2) child protection, in our view a global niche for UNICEF; 3) a stronger results focus; 4) adequately reflecting UNICEF’s humanitarian work; and 5) taking into the UN coherence agenda. Additional comments will be provided during the ongoing consultation process, which we hope will provide opportunities for all Board members to get involved.

Mr. President,

We welcome the attention UNICEF intends to give to the reduction of inequalities in its different dimensions and focus on the most disadvantaged and excluded. In this regard disaggregated data is crucial. We would like to hear how UNICEF plans to operationalize its focus on the most disadvantaged and excluded to ensure that they indeed are the ones to benefit most from the action taken.

We also welcome the approach that is increasingly cross-sectoral and leveraging synergies between focus areas, such as child protection concerns in the health sector. As regards child protection we feel that it is not as visible in the strategy as it should be considering the global niche it provides to UNICEF. UNICEF’s current response to the HIV epidemic is focused and it is important to ensure that HIV work in the new strategy is also aligned with the UNAIDS strategy 2011-2015 as well as the results and budget frameworks for 2014-2015.

The outline in its current form could make clearer links to the lessons learned from the end of the cycle review of the current strategic cycle and other recent global thematic evaluations, such as the three discussed in this Board session. We particularly hope to see the HRBAP evaluation recommendations addressed in the new MTSP.

We appreciate that the outline emphasizes a strengthened results focus and improvements in reporting. We look forward to seeing in more detail how the dynamic
results framework will allow for more flexible reporting on results. We welcome the initial stages of improving reporting on aggregate/organisation wide results based on action on the ground by concentrating on a limited number of countries with high burden or promise of progress. We find promising the intention to better integrate human rights, gender and environment as crosscutting issues in the MTSP and we hope to see them also clearly integrated into the results framework.

Mr. President,

We appreciate the assurance that humanitarian action will have separate objectives and indicators as well as separate reporting. Additionally, it is important to ensure the possibility for and financial systems to track the humanitarian funding (including also the contributions from the un-earmarked core resources) for accountability purposes. As humanitarian assistance makes up about 30-40% of UNICEF total operations budgetwise, it needs to be adequately reflected throughout the MTSP.

The MTSP outline emphasizes a strong link between humanitarian action and development programmes, which will, as stated, result in systematic strategies to build resilience. We welcome the importance given to LRRD (linking relief, rehabilitation and development) and resilience. This indicates UNICEF’s integrated approach to humanitarian action and development, which, however, should not lose track of the specific advantages of both components, nor the specific normative foundation of the humanitarian action. We would appreciate more information about how UNICEF will build resilience, how it is linked to the common approach by OCHA and IASC on the matter, and how is it related to UNICEF’s own funding streams.

Mr. President,

The strategy should take into account the UN coherence agenda and demonstrate a clear division of labour and cooperation with other UN agencies. As indicated in the outline we hope to see the outcome of the QCPR resolution of 2012 reflected in the strategy of all operative agencies in a coordinated manner that also allows reporting on progress in this respect.

Another matter that we find very important is how UNICEF is positioned in the post 2015 and the aid effectiveness agenda of Paris, Accra and Busan. Against this backdrop, the strategy must clearly define the role of UNICEF as a relevant and outward looking development partner able to coordinate and collaborate with other UN agencies and the wider community of development and humanitarian actors at the global level and in the field.

Already at an early stage we would like to note the importance of communicating an organizational strategy. It should be possible to communicate the key points into maximum
one to two pages. Some good examples of this are UNFPAs graphic “Bulls Eye”, and the two page descriptions of strategies of GAVI and the Global Fund.

Finally, I would like to express once again Finland’s full support to the invaluable work of UNICEF, and appreciate UNICEF’s continuous efforts to further enhance its work, to improve the lives of the most vulnerable children in the world and realize their rights.

Thank you Mr. President.