MTSP Statement

Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to thank the [Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF] for his comprehensive oral presentation. I would also like to thank UNICEF for preparing the two reports that we are discussing today.

We are especially grateful for the presentations that were given to members of the Board during informal consultations ahead of this session. These presentations clearly laid out our progress, lessons learned, and recommendations for the future. They serve as useful tools to guide our discussion.

On behalf of my delegation, I would like to express our appreciation for the efforts being made towards preparing the Mid-Term Strategic Plan. Israel supports the directions stipulated in the outline report before us. There is of course still much work to be done – but the MTSP is certainly a good basis for further discussion and planning.

I would like to offer some specific comments on the reports before us.

Israel is pleased with the importance that the report places on innovation in the next MTSP. The report rightly mentions that innovation has often proven critical to achieving results. We commend the leadership of the Executive Director, Mr. Tony Lake, in supporting refined and innovative approaches in UNICEF programming. Innovation is especially important in scaling-up interventions for disadvantaged and excluded children. Scaling-up was identified as a challenge at the end of the last cycle, especially in focus area 1, "Young Child Survival and Development." We encourage UNICEF to address the challenge of going to scale more systematically, through innovative approaches, in the next strategic plan.

Mr. President,

Israel places particular emphasis on the need to improve gender equality work in UNICEF, and to better mainstream gender equality in the next strategic plan. This will require improving capacity among staff with technical skills on gender, as rightly pointed out in the end of cycle report.

UNICEF is currently implementing a three-year strategic priority action plan (SPAP), which we understand will be extended to 2013. We are interested to learn more about the next SPAP and its associated benchmarks, and how it will fit into the next MTSP.

Mr. President,

We were pleased to learn about UNICEF’s progress in the collection, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated data. We encourage UNICEF to strengthen its work in this regard, and incorporate these efforts into its ongoing projects. This will strengthen the research function and knowledge management of the next MTSP.
The importance of gender equality and gender mainstreaming must also be reflected in the next results-based framework. We encourage UNICEF to develop relevant gender-based results and indicators in programme sectors – especially in focus area 2, "Education."

The end of cycle report mentions that while gender gaps in school enrollment are narrowing, continuation into secondary education needs major effort. Israel believes that UNICEF should pay particular attention to this challenge in the next MTSP.

Mr. President,

Environmental sustainability is another normative principle to which Israel attaches a great deal of importance. The Mid-Term Review of 2008 suggested that greater attention must be given to integrating climate change adaptation across all focus areas. This is an area that clearly requires effort as we prepare the next MTSP. We look forward to hearing more about how UNICEF will integrate environmental sustainability in its future programmes.

Mr. President,

Challenges such as child survival and development, basic education and gender equality, HIV/AIDS, and child protection will require a strategic plan that focuses on cooperation, partnerships, innovation, and results and performance-based management. True success greatly depends on knowledge sharing and management within the organization, a key part of which is the organization's ability to learn constantly from its experience.

Another challenge of the next MTSP will be to find better ways to connect normative principles and human rights based approaches in operational activities. The lessons learned from the recent evaluation on the human rights based approach, which we will discuss later this week, must be taken into account during this process.

The next MTSP should provide UNICEF with the flexibility to respond to challenges that arise from a rapidly changing development context. While we expect the next MTSP to be robust and well-defined, it must also permit UNICEF to deal with emerging challenges – primarily in humanitarian situations, but also beyond.

As an Executive Board member, Israel is firmly committed to the process of preparing for the next MTSP. The next MTSP will shape the future of UNICEF and its operations. Israel looks forward to continuing the consultations within the Executive Board UNICEF and all partners to achieve our objectives and make a lasting difference for children across the globe.

Thank you Mr. President