Item 7: Follow-up to recommendations and decisions of the UNAIDS PCB

Joint Statement

Thank you Mr President. I have the honour to speak on behalf of Australia, New Zealand, Finland, Germany and UK, as well as my own country, Canada.

We welcome the follow-up report on the decisions and recommendations of the UNAIDS PCB. We especially support the focus on adolescents in this report. In light of the fact that 40% of new infections take place among people aged 15 to 24, collective endeavors are necessary for combination prevention among young people, who too often do not have access to comprehensive sexuality education and youth-friendly health services. As the education sector plays a central role in this regard, we would like to receive more information on UNICEF’s cooperation with UNESCO on HIV among young people.

We welcome and support the current WHO process on consolidated guidelines on ARV-related interventions and consider it as the adequate place to discuss the advantages and the risks of simplified PMTCT options.

As a joint programme, the success of UNAIDS depends on each cosponsor getting the authority from their respective boards to align their HIV/AIDS priorities with those set by the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board. In order for UNICEF to fully implement programs that will achieve the objectives outlined in UNAIDS’ 2011-2015 strategy and contribute to the deliverables included UNAIDS’ 2012-2015 Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF), it is critical that as the 2014-2017 Medium-Term Strategic Plan is developed, that the expected results in HIV/AIDS be directly aligned with the objectives and priorities of UNAIDS. As a cosponsor organization, UNICEF has already delivered a vision at UNAIDS for the deliverables, outputs and outcomes that it will be responsible for, and that it has committed to reporting on, until 2015. Given the importance of harmonizing the UBRAF with the development of the 2014-2017 MTSP, we have introduced a decision for the Board to officially recognize the importance of this harmonization. As a Board, we will need to keep this critical requirement front of mind over the coming seven month development process for the new strategic plan.

A second consideration that we would like to highlight in relation to the 31st UNAIDS PCB held in December 2012 is a decision adopted in response to the presentation of the Mid-Term Review of the UNAIDS’ Action Agenda for Accelerated Country Action for Women, Girls, Gender Equality. Among other things, the decision calls on UNAIDS and its cosponsors to:

a) increase coordinated support to countries to assess HIV responses from a gender equality perspective, with a view to inform planning, costing, budgeting and implementation of a
gender transformative HIV response, with the aim of full implementation of the Action Agenda for Women and Girls; and,
b) implement the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review, including through reprogramming and reallocation of funds within the Unified Budget, Results and Accountability Framework; and through joint mobilization of additional resources, and ensure that the results are substantively reported, in particular on [the two goals related to gender equality through the UBRAF for 2014 & 2015.

This decision will have implications for the development of the 2014-2017 Medium-Term Strategic Plan. In order to align itself with this decision, UNICEF will need to ensure that outcomes and outputs within the HIV/AIDS focus area are gender-sensitive or gender-transformative and that they align with the recommendations in the mid-term review, and speak to the full spectrum of results included in the Action Agenda. Through the mid-term review, UNICEF reported that between January 2010 and July 2012, it only allocated $700,000 towards the implementation of the Action Agenda. As part of the development of the next MTSP, UNICEF may be required to reallocate, or jointly mobilize, additional funds to comply with this decision point from the PCB.

Finally, we would like to say that we, as member states, very much appreciate the role and function of UNAIDS, and UNICEF as a co-sponsor of UNAIDS. The PCB continues to be an important fora for providing policy direction and coordinating its cosponsor organizations.

Thank you