Thank you, Mr. President.

We would also like to thank the Executive Director Lake for his thorough presentation. We are highly appreciative of UNICEF’s global leadership role of assisting and serving children and their families all over the world, and in the most difficult of circumstances.

To reach the results we want on the ground, we need more international cooperation, not less, and we need a strong and effective UN. The multilateral system is a corner stone of Norwegian foreign policy, and in it, UNICEF is a crucial partner.
President,

The annual report of the Executive Director presents a good overview of UNICEF’s performance, with generally very high output achievements. We appreciate the inclusion of scorecards, but encourage further development to make it easier to draw information from them. We also encourage UNICEF to continue working on how reporting can make UNICEF’s unique contributions to common goals more visible, and to release the annual thematic reports earlier.

We urge UNICEF to secure independence of the Evaluation function, and sufficient resources for both Evaluation and the Office of Internal Audit and Investigation.

President,

UNICEF plays a key role in strengthening both principled humanitarian responses and longer-term development commitments. In an often complex humanitarian landscape, it remains important to strike the right balance. We appreciate that UNICEF continues the work to strengthen delivery on Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action.

Education is crucial for reaching all of the SDGs, and is paramount in the humanitarian response. Countries must be the main drivers, but international support is necessary. We would like to see the new strategic plan reflect how education can contribute to work opportunities, and on how UNICEF can cooperate with other actors on this, taking different mandates into account.

We appreciate UNICEF’s willingness to host Education Cannot Wait and its efforts as Grant Agent for Global Partnership for Education, and we thank Mr. Lake for his important contributions to the Education Commission.
President,

Norway supports the goals and cross-cutting priorities envisaged in the new Strategic Plan. The plan must also describe how UNICEF will cooperate with other members of the UNDS. The planned common chapter must be followed by indicators showing changes in the behavior of individual agencies with regards to implementation of QCPR.

The Strategic Plan must also spell out how the principle of “Leaving no one behind” will be operationalized in different country contexts.

The private sector has an important role in the world’s efforts to reach the SDGs. We encourage UNICEF to develop a clear private sector strategy, recalling also the task defined in QCPR for country teams to help strengthen national capacities to leverage resources for implementation of the SDGs.

We urge UNICEF to keep in close dialogue with Member States in finalizing the new strategic plan.

President,

In view of the important multilateral principle of burden sharing, we would encourage member states to consider increasing their levels of core and softly-earmarked support for the work of UNICEF and other UN agencies, in order to enhance flexibility and improve ability to provide normative support to countries.

Thank you.