Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Tekeda Alemu,
Permanent Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the United Nations,
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Mr. President,

At the outset, let me thank you, Mr. President, for your statement. Expressing our confidence in your leadership, my delegation would continue to support you in your efforts to ensure the success of this Executive Board Session.

We thank the Executive Director for his comprehensive statement, and we appreciate his effective leadership. Thanks to the dedicated service of the Executive Director and his entire staff, UNICEF is now recognized as the third most transparent aid organization in 2016. This is the result of a persistent focus in continuously pursuing organizational efficiency and transparency.

Moreover, we appreciate UNICEF’s continued work to deliver results by supporting member states to realize the full potential of children. In this regard, UNICEF’s result-oriented process has given value for money and we acknowledge that it has saved 520 million USD by simplifying and modernizing its strategies and working procedures. We recognize this is a good achievement that should be taken as a best practice.

Mr. President,

UNICEF has continued to achieve significant results in 2016 amid tremendous challenges posed by conflicts, humanitarian crises of all sorts, and negative impacts of climate change and disease outbreaks. All these global challenges, together with the commitment of the 2030 Agenda make the responsibility of UNICEF for protecting children ever more critical and needed. As the Annual Report of the Executive Director demonstrates, though the past two decades have registered important progress for children, there is still unfinished business in realizing the rights of children, particularly in poor and vulnerable countries.
In this regard, we concur with the Annual Report that “the obstacles to meeting the commitments enshrined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are considerable.”

But we all know that with political will, committed leadership and organizational efficiency and effectiveness, we can achieve the ambitious development agenda by 2030. Indeed, the significant results achieved by UNICEF in 2016 make us hopeful that despite the not very conducive global situation change and progress is possible. But the challenges cannot be wished away.

Mr. President,

We commend UNICEF for preparing the Strategic Plan, 2018 -2021 which aims to contribute towards the implementation of the 2030 and Addis Ababa Actions Agendas, the Paris Climate Agreement, the Sendai Disaster Risk Reduction Framework and the QCPR. In addition, taking lessons from the successes and shortcomings of the current Strategic Plan is also welcome. We believe the next Strategic Plan would enable UNICEF to meet its mission of leaving no child behind, with a particular emphasis on the most disadvantaged children.

We note that implementing the new Strategic Plan requires further broadening the resource base of UNICEF. In this age of trans-boundary challenges, multilateral organizations such as UNICEF need more support from member states, particularly developed countries and all development stakeholders to meet their plans in support of national endeavors.
Mr. President,

In our national commitments to realize the rights of children, UNICEF is one of our most reliable development partners. We value and appreciate the continued support of UNICEF in child health and nutrition, water and sanitation, education, protection of children, particularly in emergency situations. Let me stress that as we continue to face drought which has affected 7.8 million people in Ethiopia, we express appreciation for the continued work of UNICEF in our endeavors to protect vulnerable children in most affected areas.

Let me also take this opportunity to express the commitment of the Ethiopian government to take all the necessary measures, including by allocating 300 million USD, to mitigate the impacts of the current drought and save lives. However, due to the severity of the drought, Ethiopia would appreciate if the international community could provide more resources to support the relief works of the government and our development partners such as UNICEF.

To conclude, Mr. President, the full realization of the rights and potential of children, and closing the remaining gaps by implementing SDGs requires revitalized global partnership. In this regard, nimble and adaptive development organizations like UNICEF are real partners for developing countries. It is our hope that the next Strategic Plan would enable UNICEF to intensify its support for vulnerable countries in line with their national development strategies.

I thank you