Second Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board

Statement by Denmark

Item 1: Opening statements by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director of UNICEF

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[Introduction]

- Thank you very much, Mr. President, for giving me the floor and thank you for your leadership. Thank you to the Executive Director, Ms. Fore, for your very informative statement.
- As this will be my last meeting of the Board in my capacity as Permanent Representative of Denmark, allow me to make a few remarks in response to the statement of the Executive Director.

[Updates financial estimates]

- First, let me touch upon UNICEF’s financial situation and how it is affecting the organisation’s ability to deliver on its mandate.
- For UNICEF, 2017 was a record-breaking year for resource mobilization.
- This unfortunately to some extent reflects the serious and protracted crises in Yemen, Syria, and beyond.
- But it is also a testament to the strong belief among partners and donors that UNICEF delivers crucial assistance to the children who are caught in these crises. This belief is shared by my own Government.
- The dual mandate of UNICEF places the organisation as a central actor in ensuring the integration of humanitarian and development work, and we look forward to continued leadership of UNICEF in this regard.
- For UNICEF, as for other UN funds and programmes, it remains crucial to continuously be able to attract core funding. This is to ensure the sustainability of UNICEF interventions and for UNICEF to deliver on its mandate.
• In this regard, we wish to commend UNICEF for in 2017 having obtained the highest-ever regular resources revenue from the private sector generated in a year.

• We agree with UNICEF that the rise in private sector funding is central in the efforts to increase the share of future core funding to UNICEF.

[UN Reform]
• Allow me to comment on the reform of the UN Development System, which forms the very important framework for the implementation of UNICEF’s Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2021.

• We must not forget that the agreement between Member States on reform of the UN Development System has already been reached and that resolution 72/279 gives a clear mandate for the road ahead. This mandate must now be implemented, loyally, and in close and constructive cooperation among all parts of the UN development system.

• In this regard, we welcome UNICEF’s expressed commitment to the reform agenda and intention to view reform as an opportunity.

[Innovation]
• We also welcome the continued focus on innovation and the impressive results by UNICEF in this respect. Denmark has been a strong contributor to the UNICEF Innovation Fund since its inception and will continue to support the Fund.

• This is risk-willing capital, but we need to find new ways of being even more effective in reaching out to the children.
• We look forward to participating in the Special Focus Session this afternoon.

[Youth]

• When it comes to the promotion of the youth agenda, we commend UNICEF’s *Young People’s Agenda* initiative. It is essential to invest in young people’s opportunities, but also to ensure that young people are meaningfully engaged in planning, in decision-making and in implementation of programs.

• We encourage UNICEF and the whole UN system to work together in a coordinated and coherent way to ensure involvement of youth as valuable agents of change.

[Sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment]

• Before I close, I want to raise the important topic of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. Such behaviour is not only wrong, it is also very harmful for the UN’s credibility as a global norm setter.

• We appreciate that UNICEF is standing firm on its principle of zero tolerance, and expect the organisation to continuously work to end such misconduct, including based on the findings of UNICEF’s independent review.

[Closing]

• Let me end by extending my appreciation to everyone – both to you, Henrietta, but also to all colleagues present here today, for our good and
constructive partnership over the years. It has been a true pleasure working with all of you.

Thank you.