UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

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UK MISSION TO THE UN
IN RESPONSE TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF UNICEF

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I would like to thank the Executive Director and the President of the Executive Board for their opening statements.

Mr. Executive Director, as you know, this year has already seen a record number of political and humanitarian crises. Funding for humanitarian action is rising to meet these challenges but it continues to be under unprecedented pressure. The international community must keep looking for new and innovative responses.

UNICEF is playing a critical role in responding to many of these emergencies. The UK appreciates and is pleased to support your efforts in Syria, Iraq and neighbouring countries, in particular to deliver services for children affected by the conflict.

We need a well-coordinated, cross-system response to these emergencies. We urge UNICEF to support OCHA’s work to develop a whole-of-Syria Needs, Response and Gap analysis, which we hope will lead to a single humanitarian appeal for Syria by December 2014. Expanding both cross-border and ex-Damascus operations are essential to an effective whole of Syria approach – one is not a substitute for the other. Agencies must use the full scope of UNSCR 2165 to reach those in need. This includes expanding the scale and reach of UN operations and increasing support to NGOs’ cross-border operations.

UNICEF also has an important role to play in integrating short-term humanitarian action with long-term development goals to help countries reduce the likelihood of conflict, and to become more resilient and able to mitigate impacts from natural disasters and other emergencies in the future.

Mr Executive Director, UNICEF is a critical part of the international response to rising humanitarian needs. We encourage you to be proactive in ensuring your humanitarian work is adequately resourced from the regular budget.
The UK welcomes your work on violence against women and girls in emergencies. We encourage you to maintain your leadership on this important issue as well as your constructive collaboration with UNFPA to improve UN coordination of gender-based violence in emergencies.

We also commend your continued commitment to scaling up nutrition. Current and emerging nutrition crises in parts of Africa highlight how critical it is that UNICEF works with other key parts of the international system to tackle malnutrition in a coherent and coordinated way.

Mr Executive Director, the UK reiterates the importance we attach to a constructive dialogue with Member States about a critical mass of resources and financing the Strategic Plan. We commend UNICEF for its efforts so far. We recognise the importance of increasing resources that are flexible, predictable, less earmarked, and aligned to the outcomes of the Strategic Plan. We hope that an ongoing structured dialogue will help identify innovative ways to widen the donor base and increase core contributions.

Mr Executive Director, in closing I would like to reaffirm the UK’s firm commitment to its partnership with UNICEF. This summer proved no exception, with close collaboration on the Girl Summit in London in July. We would like to extend our sincere thanks in particular to you, Mr. Executive Director, for your role in co-hosting the event with Prime Minister Cameron. The Girl Summit Charter, which outlines an agenda for change, was agreed by more than 450 signatories, including 36 governments. Over 130 governments, organisations and individuals made commitments to action to end FGM and/or CEFM. And the Girl Summit social media campaign generated more than 11,000 online pledges to end the practices and more than 130,000 social media posts – creating close to one billion chances to see Girl Summit messages. We look forward to further successful collaboration.

Mr President, Mr Executive Director, I thank you.