Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees

Mr President, Mr Lake, distinguished delegates,

It is my honour to speak today for the final time as Chair of the Standing Group, representing the family of National Committees. As 36 independent organizations, whose constituencies total over 1.1 billion people around the globe, I am proud that since 1947, we have raised over $12 billion US dollars for UNICEF, while advocating for the rights of children everywhere.

Before I share my formal remarks, I would like to take this opportunity to offer heartfelt thanks to Executive Director Anthony Lake and the entire team of Deputy Executive Directors, for your continuous support, your challenging questions, and your guidance throughout my tenure. I would also like to offer my thanks to former PFP Director Leila Pakkala and current PFP Director Gerard Bocquenet, as well as DOC Director Paloma Escudero and all of the members of the UNICEF General Management Team who have walked this journey with me over the past two years and have assisted in insuring our joint success.
Mr. President,

As we look back upon this past year of unprecedented level three emergencies, we are reminded of all that the children of the world are forced to endure. And, we are reminded that the National Committees continue to stand by UNICEF’s side, never forgetting our mandate or our individual as well as collective commitments to the world’s children.

National Committees are proud to share in UNICEF’s many achievements in 2013, especially in our contribution to the Private Sector Partnerships Strategic Plan and the outstanding results that were achieved in the Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division.

Despite difficult economic times and fierce competition for funds, National Committees continued to support UNICEF generously while reaching unprecedented results. The National Committees' total contribution to UNICEF in 2013 was a record US$1 billion and 127 million dollars, which corresponds to 90.5% of all PFP’s Revenue. This represents an increase of 24% compared to 2012 results. Regular Resource contributions grew from $532 million in 2012 to $547 million dollars in 2013. Other Regular Resources grew from $298 million in 2012 to $394 million dollars in 2013, an increase of 32%. Finally, we are proud to have contributed $186 million USD out of a total of $195 million that was raised by UNICEF PFP in support of emergencies. This represents an increase of 131% compared to 2012.

The National Committee family has for many years invested in innovative ways of advocating for children. We believe in the power of social connectivity and count on very talented and skilled staff to bring the realities of children all over the world
close to home. In 2013, our total digital income was $172 million dollars, which represents an increase of 22% compared to 2012. We have tremendous support from our 4.5 million social media followers, an increase of 43% since 2012. On Facebook alone, we count over 1.5 million subscribers. In 2013, our websites were visited over 30 million times.

National Committees reached these accomplishments while implementing rigorous measures to improve our individual and collective performance and results for children. Not only did we increase in total contribution for UNICEF, but we also increased our contribution rate. This rate rose from 71.3% in 2011 to 72.3% in 2012. This year, I am proud to report that we collectively surpassed our 75% target reaching a contribution rate of 76% in 2013.

Mr President,

Clearly the National Committees have and will continue to be an integral piece in the long chain that enables UNICEF to do the fine work that you do. Unfortunately, during many of my interactions over the past few years I have come to realize how little is known about the National Committees and how we are often misunderstood. It is truly critical that members of the UNICEF family have a clear understanding of what a National Committee is – how we function – what we are guided by and how we measure our success. It is for this reason that I formally urge everyone in this room to take the time to visit with and learn about at least one National Committee in the months ahead. And, for those delegations whose countries house National Committees, that we seek ways to more closely work together and to better understand how the sum of our collective efforts is far greater than the sum of our individual parts. National Committees would love to welcome you and tell you about our work, introduce you to our passionate staff,
learn from one another and discuss new opportunities of collaboration. I challenge the Board and the new Standing Group leadership that will follow me to continue on this path.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the National Committee family and my colleagues on the Standing Group. In my two years as their representative, I saw National Committees endure difficult times with dignity and restraint, never letting go of our responsibility towards children. I was also witness to great progress being achieved on several fronts: we are more efficient, more effective and more innovative. We have fostered and established strong partnerships and gathered constituencies around common causes. We have strengthened our ties with our UNICEF colleagues and collaboration has never been more fruitful.

National Committees are not naive about the magnitude of the problems of today, nor what might unfold ahead of us, but we believe that these challenges will not outlast us. A better world can and must be achieved, and we will continue to fight the good fight alongside our UNICEF partners in this pursuit. It is in this spirit of common humanity, friendship and hope that I end this intervention by thanking you all for the opportunity to participate over these past two years.

Thank you.