Mr. President

I will deliver this statement on behalf of the USA, Belgium and my own country Switzerland.

Switzerland welcomes and thanks for the completion of the 2 global thematic evaluations on UNICEF’s role as Cluster lead and on the UNICEF programs to protect children in emergencies.

We note with appreciation the overall thoroughness and the quality of both evaluations. We welcome the fact that the management almost entirely agreed to all the recommendations and we support the planned activities and ongoing actions.

We believe these 2 evaluations can contribute to the institutionalization of a strong culture of results-based management and knowledge management thus assisting UNICEF to achieve better results.
Let me highlight a number of critical challenges for the evaluation function and future programming.

First, we found both evaluations were not explicit enough on which positive impact the cluster lead approach and the child protection programming in emergencies had on the beneficiaries and on strengthening national capacities.

Second, on cluster lead; we strongly support the recommendation for UNICEF to follow the Inter-Agency-Standing-Committee cluster guidance and move into ordinary sectorial coordination at the earliest stage possible. Coordination efforts, be it for cluster or sector, are not an end in itself and should always lead to the improvement of assistance and service delivery for beneficiaries. We note that the evaluation found that UNICEF’s ability to carry out its Cluster Lead role well enough is limited because it is undertaking its activities in more situations and over extended periods of time, above and beyond the role that activated clusters are designed to play. This cluster “mission creep” stretches resources by spreading effort. There are no clear, established priorities that are based on risk assessment; and this limits the ability of global clusters to provide high-quality support. We urge UNICEF to implement the evaluation recommendations to address these issues.

Regarding the evaluation on child protection in Emergencies, we support that UNICEF should put more efforts on preventive measures: among them, UNICEF should develop the inter-agency human rights based
advocacy and engage with the rule-of-law and security sector agendas in fragile and conflict affected states. In this regard, Switzerland is keen to learning more on how the recent study on integrated programming in humanitarian action, and the future global strategy on resilience will be implemented in the framework of child protection in emergencies.

Finally we also note that the evaluation found that UNICEF could improve on efforts including monitoring, reporting grave violations against children, and working to prevent violence. It also found UNICEF’s data and case management to be weak, which prevented the agency from demonstrating outcomes. We urge UNICEF to continue making improvements in these areas.

To conclude we appreciate that global thematic evaluations are discussed at the board. In addition to that, we would like to receive information of the state of implementation of these recommendations on an annual basis.

Thank you for your attention.