Statement by H.E. Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota
Deputy Permanent Representative

9 September 2014
(Check against delivery)
Mr. President, Executive Director,

Brazil fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Costa Rica, on behalf of CELAC, and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

At the outset, we would like to thank the Executive Director, Mr. Anthony Lake, for his opening remarks, as well as recognize the efficiency in putting together the documentation and proceedings of the second regular session of this Executive Board.

Mr. President,

UNICEF’s mission speaks very closely to Brazil and its social public policies. In a moment we are trying to establish an ambitious, transformational, sustainable and universal post-2015 development agenda, UNICEF must play a strengthened role, which Brazil supports and deeply values. One promising partnership we would like to further advance with UNICEF has been the promotion of a mutually supportive relationship between humanitarian cooperation and sustainable development, through which we can achieve the threefold objective of mitigating impact of crisis, increasing resilience and reducing inequality. In addition to being a more cost-effective way of using scarce resources, it also permits the necessary link with actions for the rehabilitation of vulnerable communities and the promotion of durable solutions.

Brazil supports the leadership that UNICEF is showing with regards to initiatives that aim at integrating long-term development and short-term emergency responses. In a time of ever more pressing challenges, it is urgent to secure the incorporation of resilience-building policies geared towards development into the humanitarian system. The event ("Cash transfers, Local Purchases and Social Safety-Nets: Building Resilience and Bridging the Divide Between Humanitarian Assistance and Development") Brazil organized in parallel to ECOSOC's Humanitarian Segment last June is a clear example of our support to such approach, and we were glad to have counted on the participation of UNICEF Deputy Executive Director at the occasion.

Mr. President,

The success of the resilience-building social policies implemented in Brazil during the last ten years - such as the conditional cash transfer program "Bolsa Família" and the governmental purchase of produce (PAA Food Purchase Program) have come to shape our "sustainable humanitarian cooperation" initiatives, such as the PAA Africa Program and school-meal initiatives in Haiti.

More importantly, they have shown how an income transfer program has contributed to strengthening Brazil’s social protection, particularly with regards to those most vulnerable. Created in 2003 to relieve extreme poverty and to fight hunger in Brazil, the conditional cash transfer program Bolsa Família (or "Family Grant") is acknowledged as the world’s largest income transfer program and is assisting families to care for children’s health and education. By conditioning cash transfers to commitments by beneficiaries with regards to children and
adolescents school attendance and vaccination control of boys and girls under the age of 7, Bolsa Familia is helping Brazil to break the cycle of poverty throughout generations.

A study published by The Lancet magazine stresses that Bolsa Família contributed to the reduction in the infant mortality rate of children up to 5 years of age by 19.4 percent between 2004 and 2009. The same study reveals that in the diseases directly associated with poverty, the impact on infant mortality rates was even more impressive: a decline of 46.3 percent in association with cases of diarrhea and 58.2 percent of cases due to malnutrition.

Moreover, data from the Brazilian Ministry of Health point to a decrease of 52 percent in chronic infant malnutrition between 2008 and 2011 for children up to 6 years of age who benefited from the program.

With regards to education, results have also been very positive. Today, the program follows the lives of around 15 million children and adolescents. The minimum school attendance rate demanded by the program for children aged 6 to 15 is of 85 percent. The school dropout rate among children benefiting from Bolsa Família is lower across all basic education levels. In this way, the program has improved the scholastic trajectory of Brazil’s most vulnerable children. The school performance and the pass rate among these students are now at the same levels as with the other children in the public education network.

Mr President,

Brazil is glad to see that targets addressing children’s well-being and rights are mainstreamed throughout the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG-SDGs), adopted last July, particularly in areas such as poverty reduction, food security and malnutrition, health and education.

We fully support the view expressed in the outcome document on SDGs that the commitments that will be made in the context of the post-2015 development agenda shall benefit all, but in particular children, youth and future generations without distinction of any kind.

Inspite of the progress Brazil has experienced in recent years, there is still a lot to be done to ensure the well-being and rights of our children. Having in mind the challenges that lie ahead, Brazil was a strong supporter of the inclusion of violence against children in the context the post-2015 development agenda and we look forward to working with UNICEF to further advance the awareness on this topic on the international agenda.

Mr. President,

We attach utmost importance to the discussion on financing the Strategic Plan and we thank UNICEF for the presentation of a background paper on the concept of critical mass of core resources for the consideration of the Executive Board, in line with the mandate of QCPR.
Debates on the funding modalities and incentives to increase the percentage of core resources are important for the preservation of the intergovernmental character and the legitimacy of the work carried out by the Organization. Partnerships with the private sector are vital, but must not come at the expense of strengthened governance and a better balance between core and non-core resources. While acknowledging the benefits of a broader discussion on the quality of funding and on increasing non-core resources that are more predictable and better aligned to the Strategic Plan, we look forward to continue working on ways to increase the share of core resources in the funding of UNICEF activities.

Thank you.