Agenda item 6 i and ii (Evaluation)

Mr. President,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, United States and my own country Sweden.

Let me start by belatedly thanking the Executive Director for his opening statement this morning, describing the devastating consequences of current humanitarian crises, and the challenges of the increasing responsibilities of UNICEF and other humanitarian organizations. We pay tribute to all UNICEF staff working on the ground under difficult circumstances.

Mr. President,

Let me also thank UNICEF for the presentation just given, of the humanitarian evaluations and management responses. We especially appreciate the evaluation of UNICEF’s cluster lead agency role in humanitarian emergencies. We further commend UNICEF for presenting a synthesis-evaluation that provides the first comprehensive global review of child protection issues.

We welcome the actions taken to meet the identified gaps, including through plans, programmes and resource allocation. We underline the importance of making these evaluations and the actions taken to respond to the recommendations well known within the entire organization.

The new Strategic Plan and the Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) mark a progress in better reflecting UNICEF’s importance as a humanitarian actor with cluster lead responsibilities, as well as long-term engagement during reconstruction. We encourage UNICEF to further strengthen these aspects in the agreed mid-term review of the Integrated resource and results framework (IRRF). We encourage UNICEF to ensure sustainable financial resources for its humanitarian work.

We are concerned at the evaluation’s report of cluster “mission creep”, which is negatively impacting on UNICEF’s ability to carry out its role as Cluster Lead Agency. We support the report’s recommendation to mitigate the use of clusters in inappropriate scenarios by developing models and tools for non-cluster coordination and establishing clarity on the role of clusters to ensure efficient and fit-for-purpose coordination approaches.

We appreciate UNICEF’s contribution to the collective humanitarian response and the initiative to increase country office preparedness for cluster activation in high-risk-countries. Incentives that reward collective response should be created. UNICEF’s location of all cluster leads in Geneva contributes to better co-ordination of the humanitarian assistance. It is also essential that UNICEF recruit highly qualified staff. We therefore welcome UNICEF’s nomination of high calibre candidates for the HC Pool in the 2014 round, and congratulate UNICEF for having had the highest pass rate per agency.
We also encourage further strengthening and development of key humanitarian partnerships, in particular with OCHA, UNHCR and WFP, including joint missions and needs assessments. We would also encourage UNICEF to support UN Women’s early inclusion as a standing invitee in the IASC. Effective implementation on the ground is often strongly dependent on cooperation and synergies at the field level, and we encourage UNICEF and partners to continue these important efforts.

We further welcome that UNICEF will improve its reporting on results and results-based management of humanitarian action across the organization, including the use of sex and age disaggregated data. We also urge UNICEF to improve the reporting on regular resources allocated to humanitarian support.

We note that efforts towards strengthening the capacity in the area of education are not as highly prioritised as e.g. WASH and nutrition. This is a concern since education is critical within child protection, but at the same time we recognise the lesser interest and funding from donors. We encourage UNICEF to continue and scale up the capacity building of education staff.

We fully support UNICEF’s actions to improve protection of children in emergencies, including through inter-agency human rights-based advocacy in all contexts and needs assessments based on the different needs of girls and boys, women and men. We note that there is need for more guidance on applying the Child Protection Strategy in fragile and conflict-affected states and urge UNICEF to strengthen its efforts in this area.

We assume the planned comprehensive Child Protection fundraising strategy will be developed in the context of the structured dialogue on financing the Strategic plan.

Finally, we emphasize the importance of actions to prevent and respond to gender based violence across all humanitarian sectors. We also see the necessity to promote long-term strategies for social change to address underlying causes of GBV, as outlined in the management response plan, and to end impunity.

In conclusion Mr. President, we appreciate this opportunity to have this discussion on UNICEF’s humanitarian work and UNICEF’s global evaluations, which respond to the Board’s request.

Thank you.