Statement of Switzerland

Executive Board of UNICEF – Agenda Item 5 (Structured Funding Dialogue)

Second Regular Session 2015

September 8, 2015

Madam President,

We thank the Executive Director for his statement and his continued commitment in leading this unique organization. Switzerland would like to comment on two topics: the 2030 Agenda and the Structured Dialogue financing results of the UNICEF Strategic Plan.

1) 2030 Agenda

At the end of September, heads of state and governments will formally adopt the 2030 Agenda, a universal framework for sustainable development. The Agenda constitutes a major opportunity in global development policy. It will deepen multi-stakeholders alliances to address global challenges within a system-wide approach. Switzerland is committed to implement the SDGs both at the national and international level. We will continue to work closely with multilateral partners. UNICEF has a very important and focused mandate: to contribute to the protection, wellbeing and development of all children. It is in our view a clear comparative advantage of UNICEF to have a recognized profile in this global issue. There is still so much to be done in this field that UNICEF’s efforts should further be channeled in this direction, that is in the focus areas and outcomes as set forth in the Strategic Plan. The focus of the Strategic Plan fits very well into the 2030 Agenda. With its focused mandate, UNICEF can contribute to the implementation of exactly these targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Switzerland however expects UNICEF, together with other members of the UN Development System, to reflect on how it can best contribute to the implementation of the 2030 agenda in a coherent, effective and efficient way. 2016 is a key moment, as we will discuss the mid-term reviews of the strategic plans, and even more, as we will negotiate the quadrennial comprehensive policy...
review resolution, the QCPR. We are convinced that the QCPR 2016 should offer all members of the UN Development System the strategic guidance on how they can collectively plan, finance, implement and report on core systemic functions. This is important, as the UN Development System collectively, and its individual members specifically, are now particularly challenged to prove their relevance in regards to the expectations member states have when it comes to the UN support for assisting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

2) Structured dialogue
On the second point, Switzerland would like to thank UNICEF for presenting a strategic brief and for the organization of the informal meeting. We concur with other member states that this dialogue is of critical importance and should result in concrete steps during the course of 2016.

Allow me to express our main expectations in this regard:

Switzerland would like to see 1) an active engagement of members states and donors with UNICEF on how to improve the quality, volume, alignment and predictability of the funding so that UNICEF can deliver on the agreed priorities and foster partnerships with providers of resources not channeled through UNICEF and 2) to discuss new ideas of funding practices and innovative mechanisms.

Different elements for this dialogue are already delivered such as the agreement on a 4-year strategic plan along with an integrated resource and results budget, production of multiyear country programme, the establishment of thematic funding windows and the launch of web transparency portal. We welcome UNICEF innovative approaches such as the strategic engagement of UNICEF with the European Union and closer collaboration and the International Financial Institutions.

Yet, the trend of continued slide of regular resources continues unabated. This happens despite all the mentioned efforts and although we all know that strict earmarking comes at the expense of the priorities of children in need. We believe that the impasse between core and non-core will only be resolved by reverting to the function that is being financed and determining the appropriate form of finance for that specific function.
Let me now share Switzerland’s suggestions on how we think this dialogue should continue:

First we think that such a dialogue cannot be limited to a second regular session’s official agenda item. For that, regular and transparent informal consultation will be needed, not only between UNICEF and the Member States, but also with other key donors such as the EU, the National Committees and as well as large foundations.

Secondly we also urge to UNICEF to complement the valuable strategic brief with an overview on a) the funding gaps both in terms of outcomes and regions against the Integrated Results and Resources Framework on b) the targets for the resource mobilization and c) the risk management measures taken to mitigate exchange rate risks.

Thirdly we believe other guidance needs to feed into this dialogue, for instance the Joint Inspection Unit recommendations on Resources Mobilization Functions, the midterm review of the strategic plan and the SG report on the QCPR.

Miss President, let me conclude this statement by stressing the importance to conduct this dialogue also in the light of the ECOSOC dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN Development System, the 2030 Agenda and the upcoming negotiations of the QCPR 2016 as well as in the Midterm Review of the Strategic Plan 2014-2017.

Thank you for your attention, Miss President.