Talking points for UNICEF Executive Board

Integrated Budget item

September 4, 2013

Delivered by Chip Lyons, U.S. Special Envoy for UNICEF

Thank you, Mr. President.

- My delegation would like to align itself with the statement on the Strategic Plan made by the Netherlands.

- We are pleased to be considering the UNICEF Institutional Budget for 2014-2017 in conjunction with the new Strategic Plan.

- As we mentioned in our national statement at the June Boards, we believe the Strategic Plan is excellent, and offers a coherent vision for UNICEF programming over the next four years. In particular, my delegation commends the plan’s focus on innovation, humanitarian response, and resilience in the wake of continuing natural disasters and conflict, as well as its emphasis on evidence-based decision-making and establishing measurable goals. Like other delegations, we also applaud the strong focus on equity laid out by Executive Director Lake and the entire UNICEF leadership team.

- We would like to commend UNICEF for its implementation of results-based budgeting, and encourage the agency to continue its excellent work on refining performance indicators along with measures of outcomes achieved. Focusing the organization on successful outcomes and eliminating programs that do not achieve expected results will help UNICEF become a more efficient and effective organization. It will also help us and other donors make a better case for additional resources.

- We are glad to note the new institutional budget shows management and other institutional costs decreasing from 14.1 percent to 11.9 percent of total resources compared to the 2010-2013 budget. In these difficult economic times, we applaud the financial discipline shown by UNICEF in reducing these costs by over 5 percent. However, we note that specific line items including travel and conference costs are no longer listed separately. We would ask UNICEF, along with the other funds and programs, to provide this information to Member States to ensure maximum transparency.

- We are happy to see that the new budget will have $823 million in cost recovery from other resources. We view this as progress and applaud UNICEF and the other funds and programs for instituting this and other changes as mandated by the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and recent Board decisions.
We know that UNICEF is aware of the assumptions underlying this budget, and is prepared to adjust the budget accordingly if projected contributions are not realized. We applaud the tremendous efforts by the national committees of UNICEF, particularly in Latin America, to mobilize impressive levels of resources from private donations. We view UNICEF’s projected increase in contributions to regular resources at a time of global economic difficulty as a testament to the faith that member states place in the organization.