

Closing statement by H.E Dr A. K Abdul Momen, President of UNICEF Executive Board and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN at the First Regular Session of UNICEF Executive Board on January 14, 2010

Excellencies, the Executive Director, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen

We are deeply saddened by the tragic event in Haiti. Our prayers and hearts go out to the families whose lives have been suffered. The Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and UN Special Envoy President Clinton briefed the membership at the Urgent Informal Plenary of the General Assembly yesterday. Preliminary estimates indicate that one third of the 9 million Haitian have been severely affected. International community has demonstrated overwhelming support and solidarity with the people of Haiti. This Board also joins the same.

We are also greatly concerned for our colleagues from the United Nations mission, MINUSTAH, many of whom are still missing. Executive Director in her statement yesterday has already mentioned that the majority of UNICEF staff in Haiti is accounted for. We are still trying to get in touch with some of our staff. UNICEF premises in Port-au-Prince are badly damaged and communications facilities have been completely destroyed.

Time is up for our immediate response and like always UNICEF is already there. UNICEF is deploying necessary supplies to Jacmel and Port-au-Prince in shortest possible time to assist with recovery efforts including clean water and sanitation, therapeutic foods, medical supplies and temporary shelter – four key elements of the immediate humanitarian needs. The Executive Director has also made it clear in her statement yesterday that “UNICEF will do everything in its power to make sure these needs are met.” I can assure you, Madame Executive Director that you have the full support of the Executive Board in that regard.

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

Once again, it is a privilege for me to pay special tribute to the Executive Director of UNICEF, Ms. Ann M. Veneman for her excellent leadership in promoting the well-being of children and protecting their rights throughout the world as she will be leaving us soon upon completion of her five year tour of duty.

After three days of fruitful exchanges and interactions, we are now approaching the end of the first regular session. I would like to take this opportunity to convey, on behalf of the Bureau, my sincere thanks to all participants for their cooperation and support.

Our agenda during this session included the roadmap for the integrated budget, the annual report to the Economic and Social Council, the private fundraising work plan, and a review of progress on implementing IPSAS. We have also discussed and reviewed UNICEF’s cost recovery policy approved by the Board in 2006. I would like to congratulate you on the high level of the debate on these agenda, the exceptional quality of the interventions, and particularly the relevance of the recommendations and communications which have been made in the course of our work. We have to agree, this has given us an opportunity to have a very good exchange on the important questions which are at the heart of our agenda.

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen

UNICEF is guided by the urgency of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, recognizing that children are at the very heart of those goals. I note with satisfaction too that the session achieved this particular objective, with renewed commitments from the member states. I am confident this will be useful in creating a new dynamic which would permit us to engage more during the upcoming High-level Meeting of MDGs later this year. UNICEF, as always, can help encourage the membership to appreciate further the urgency of addressing the challenges in achieving the MDGs, which is vital if we want to improve the living conditions of hundreds of millions of children, and ensure growth and lasting development in poor countries. The economic circumstances today are difficult all around the world, but we should not and cannot allow the partners to development to give up their commitments in their commitments and contributions.

We appreciate the continued efforts made by UNICEF to improve system-wide coherence for better impact of UN operational activities at the field level. I on behalf of the Bureau, take note of the appreciation voiced by members of the Executive Board for the work accomplished by UNICEF in implementing the TCPR and QCPR and the improved quality of this year's annual report to the ECOSOC.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished delegates,

The performance of UNICEF's private fundraising efforts is noteworthy. We are encouraged by pledges made by the member states to either maintain or even increase their contributions to UNICEF, despite the impact of the greatest economic and financial crisis since 1930s.

Our world cannot flourish and live in harmony as long as there are scourges like infant and mother mortality, epidemics, illiteracy, hunger and poverty. It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to join forces to meet these challenges. We are more than ever convinced, therefore, that through our efforts, our solidarity, together, we can bring about solutions consistent with the legitimate expectations of the people.

To conclude, Madame Executive Director, distinguished delegates,

I would like to repeat here the resolute commitment of the Bureau to strive, together with UNICEF and all partners, to achieve our common objectives. I am thankful to the distinguished delegates for welcoming me as the new President of the Board and also for extending all-out support throughout the session.

With this, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I adjourn the work of the First Regular Session of 2010 of the Executive Board of UNICEF, and thank you for your attention.