Madam Chair,

We submit this statement on behalf of the European Union as a donor.

We welcome the evaluation of UNICEF’s contribution to education in humanitarian situations and the positive Management response. We consider education is not only a fundamental right but also a basic need of children caught up in emergencies, and therefore a key component of humanitarian action.

We welcome recommendation 1 on equipping leaders, including in country teams, with leadership and advocacy capacities and tools to strengthen the prioritisation of education at the same level as other sectors in humanitarian action. Championing education and ensuring an adequate level of funding remains key.

We fully support recommendation 2 on the promotion of equitable learning opportunities, gender equality and disability inclusion in humanitarian education contexts. Humanitarian actions, including education, should focus on the most vulnerable and promote integrated approaches to address a variety of learning and protection needs of disadvantaged children, including girls, children with disabilities and children in migration. More can be done to understand their capacities and barriers that affect them, and ensure their participation in education.
We welcome recommendation 3, which encourages UNICEF to develop innovative solutions that produce tangible learning outcomes, adapted to each context and learning modality. This is particularly important today, with the COVID-19 pandemic having led to the closure of thousands of schools, interrupting learning and negatively affecting the well-being of millions of children, disproportionately affecting girls and vulnerable groups.

We fully support recommendation 4 on strengthening capacities of staff and partners in implementing the Core Commitments for Children on education. This is essential to ensure that education in humanitarian action identifies, targets and reaches the most marginalised children. Systematic approach to capacity-building and greater contextualisation will help enhancing collaboration at all levels of education in emergencies.

We appreciate recommendation 5 on ensuring that education in emergencies interventions capitalise on national capacities and pays greater attention to community consultations. This will contribute to strengthening the link between humanitarian and development programming, facilitating as well integration, and to promoting the Grand Bargain localisation and accountability to affected populations commitments.

Education in emergencies continues to be a priority for EU humanitarian aid. The commitment to dedicate 10% of EU’s humanitarian aid budget to education will, for the years to come, be guiding our policy, advocacy and funding support. The EU intends to continue championing education for peace and protection.

Thank you.