

26 March 2020

Excellencies,

As President of the UNICEF Executive Board, I and my fellow Bureau members, have the responsibility to ensure that our Executive Board can continue to provide its strategic guidance and support to UNICEF, as well as exercise its oversight and accountability functions, even in times of crisis like the one we are all grappling with at the moment with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now more than ever we need to make sure that UNICEF has the support from our Board to continue to deliver on its mandate for every child, everywhere. As the Secretary-General stated "*We are in an unprecedented situation and the normal rules no longer apply. We cannot resort to the usual tools in such unusual times.*" With this in mind, and in full alignment with the measures taken by the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council, as well as in coordination with the other Executive Boards, I would like to inform you of the following mitigation measures for the coming weeks:

1. Effective immediately, all Executive Board meetings organized by the Secretariat will be arranged virtually (using the Zoom platform) for an initial period of four weeks (ending on 24th April 2020), pending further revision. The Secretariat of the Executive Board, in close consultation with the Bureau, will inform and keep updated the Board members and observers of any changes in the calendars of upcoming informal briefings.
2. Similarly, all Bureau meetings will be virtually organized to ensure remote participation of all Bureau Members. In this connection, I am pleased to inform you that we had our first virtual Bureau meeting on Tuesday 24 March which was very successful. The note for the record of the meeting will be shared with all the Executive Board members as per usual practice.
3. As earlier informed, the 2020 Joint Field Visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, which was originally scheduled to visit Indonesia from 4 to 11 April 2020, has been postponed after consultation with the Government of Indonesia, the United Nations Resident Coordinator, the United Nations Country Team in Indonesia, and in light of the instructions to postpone all non-essential travel;
4. As also informed, a similar decision was taken on our Executive Board annual field visit, which was scheduled to visit Timor Leste from 17 to 26 April 2020. The Bureau will continue to monitor the situation and update the Board members accordingly.

The Presidents of the Executive Boards and their Bureaux will regularly consult as this situation of *force majeure* continues to evolve rapidly, and further measures may be needed. I am also in close contact and coordination with the UNICEF Executive Director, Ms. Henrietta Fore and her team, including the Secretariat of our Executive Board.

Allow me to express my solidarity to those affected by the COVID-19 and to honor the efforts of all those who are thoroughly responding to the pandemic.

Please accept, Excellencies, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.



Rabab Fatima
Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations and
President of the UNICEF Executive Board

**All Executive Board members and observers of the UNICEF Executive Board
New York**