Talking Points for Executive Board SRS

Item 12

Ms. Hannan Suleiman, Deputy Executive Director Management

- Thank you, Madame la Presidente, good afternoon/good morning all, distinguished delegates.

- Thank you for your continuous interest in our work around organizational culture change and tackling sexual misconduct, both within our workplace and in the communities where we work around the globe.

- Overall, we have made solid progress in many areas. We have strengthened our systems to prevent and respond to all forms of misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, through important policy revisions. We have significantly reinforced the investigation function, including to ensure more robust victim-centered approaches. We continue to invest in country level action to operationalize our commitment to zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse. Our journey to transform our organizational culture is expanding and evolving, with renewed focus on eliminating racism and discrimination. As the ED mentioned in her opening remarks on Tuesday, our Internal Task Team is currently working hard to identify and enact measures to address discrimination in UNICEF, with a specific focus on racism and ethnicity. We expect their report and action plan in December.

- And we have evidence for the progress we are making: I am pleased to inform you that the results from UNICEF’s Global Staff Survey 2020 are now available (a 2-page written summary has been shared with you for this session). We had an overall staff participation rate of 79%. The overall results were quite positive, with the strongest improvements in the areas of Work/Life Balance and Personal Empowerment compared to the 2017 GSS results. With respect to the ITF report specifically, 83% of respondents feel that management in their offices was taking appropriate and necessary actions to follow up on the report, and 78% of our personnel believe that their workplace culture has improved in the past year. Areas where we still need to do better include Diversity; Career and Professional Development, and Office Efficiency and Effectiveness.

- Obviously, since our last update at the beginning of the year, a lot has changed in the global environment, and within our own organization, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has created many challenges for our work globally, but also sparked several opportunities to think and deliver differently, and we have embraced it to ‘Reimagine UNICEF as mentioned by the ED in her opening remarks to the Board.’ We have embarked on a comprehensive organizational improvement journey that harnesses these opportunities to drive a reimagined future for UNICEF:
  - a future that is forward looking and forward leaning
  - that strengthens UNICEF’s decentralized presence
  - One that embraces agility, simplicity and speed in how we work to deliver results for children;
  - Where our ways of working rely on digital, automated, networked and cross functional approaches that free up staff time to focus on results;
  - Where, as a learning organization, we acquire and share knowledge to improve and adapt our ways of working,
And most importantly, a future built on, and by, a highly motivated and empowered workforce and a respectful and inclusive workplace.

- With all our partners within and outside the UN system, we will continue to seize opportunities to drive transformative action during these unprecedented times with a focus on programme acceleration; business innovation; partnership strengthening; and further building a culture of care, respect, integrity and accountability among our own people and within the communities where we work.

- We count on the Board members’ continuous support and we look forward to discussions around how to institutionalize further this important work, particularly as we seek your support to navigate through a time of declining core resources.

- Thank you, Madame la Presidente, and over to the presenters.