



REPUBLIC OF POLAND

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Second regular session of the UNICEF Executive Board

***Item 2: Opening statements by the President of the UNICEF
Executive Board and the Executive Director of UNICEF***

**Statement by Ms. Joanna SKOCZEK,
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations**

New York, 6 September 2022

Madam President,

Madam Executive Director,

Let me start with warmest congratulations to Her Excellency Ambassador Maritza Chan Valverde, the new President of the UNICEF Executive Board. *Madam President*, please rest assured of our full cooperation and support as you steer the deliberations of the Board to a successful conclusion during this session and beyond.

I would also like to express Poland's continued appreciation for UNICEF's advocacy and strong engagement to address the needs of children worldwide and focus the international community's attention on their rights.

We commend UNICEF's continued response to existing and emerging needs alike, be it climate crisis, pandemic or war. As the UNICEF Executive Director has aptly pointed out in her opening statement, the ongoing war in Ukraine caused by Russia indeed constitutes one of the greatest challenges facing children today. The trauma of war hangs over a whole generation of Ukrainian children, both those who stayed in their war-torn homeland and those currently living in refugee-receiving countries, including my own.

Poland spares no effort to ensure they receive protection and assistance. In this context, we welcome the swift establishment of UNICEF's strong operational presence in Poland after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, and appreciate the multisectoral support it provides to both central and local authorities in the ongoing refugee response. UNICEF has partnered with a number of ministries, from education, family and social affairs, to health and justice, and to date has signed MoUs with 12 different municipalities. Detailed work plans developed as a result of this cooperation enable UNICEF to reach close to 780 000 refugees, and these numbers are rapidly growing.

UNICEF assists Polish authorities in providing holistic support to thousands of children and their caregivers, facilitating their access to mental health and psychosocial support, procuring necessary vaccines and First Aid kits, providing capacity building trainings for health professionals and teachers, conducting awareness-raising campaigns as well as supporting child benefits for Ukrainian children.

Ensuring that children continue their education is one of our top priorities. UNICEF also supports us to enroll the huge numbers of new students into the education system, by hiring and training teachers, providing Polish language learning and sourcing learning materials. We expect close to 200 000 Ukrainian refugee children to attend Polish schools this starting academic year. We value our partnership with UNICEF and our shared commitment to investing in education.

To conclude, I wish to reaffirm Poland's strong dedication to promote and protect the rights of the child. Polish people and authorities have shown solidarity and support, but to continue delivering and succeeding we require sustained and significant support. I strongly believe in our partnership and cooperation.