

Second Regular Session 2022 of the UNICEF Executive Board

- Statement after opening statements –

Statement delivered by Ms. Kristel Lõuk, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, Estonia

Md. President,

Let me first congratulate you on your election as the President of the UNICEF Executive Board.

Md. President, Md. Executive Director

As a member of the UNICEF Executive Board and a longstanding partner in many development cooperation initiatives, Estonia appreciates UNICEF's exceptional efforts in supporting children and youth all over the world and giving them a voice. As this will be our last session as a board member please allow us to make a few comments.

First, while many children have started school or kindergarten this fall, there are also many children who are not so lucky due to war, flooding, drought, COVID or other crisis. For 4 million children in Ukraine it is a start of a very uncertain school year as they are suffering from the Russian war against Ukraine. In this regard, we strongly support the statement delivered by the Vice-President of the Executive Board, Ambassador of Slovakia. We highly appreciate all of UNICEF's work in Ukraine and in its neighbouring countries ensuring access to education and together with partners providing creative solutions to reach all children affected by the crisis. Children everywhere deserve to learn and it's up to all of us to make this happen. This is why the Transforming Education Summit is very timely. Estonia will participate at high level. Also, Estonia has joined the Global

Partnership of Education to ensure equal access to quality education to all children and support transformation of education to the digital world.

Second, climate change is affecting millions of children around the world. With recent devastating flash floods in Pakistan, more than 3 million children are in need of humanitarian assistance. We highly appreciate UNICEF' work with delivering lifesaving supplies and medicine to help children affected by the floods in Pakistan. Climate change and environmental degradation undermines the rights of every child.

Madam President, Estonia highly appreciates the UNICEF and all its staff, who often work in challenging environments, and we look forward to continuing close cooperation with UNICEF.

Thank you!