

**Second Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board
6 – 9 September 2022**

Check against delivery

**Intervention by the Chair of the Standing Group of National
Committees to Item 7: Report of the accountability system of
UNICEF**

Mr President, Executive Director Russell, distinguished delegates, National Committee colleagues,

Thank you for this comprehensive update. As the world evolves, bringing new challenges to children, so should UNICEF change and adapt in order to continue to be fit for purpose, efficient and effective in its operations.

I would like to take this opportunity to raise two points related to the UNICEF Accountability System:

First, as the report accurately describes, National Committees have a special partnership with UNICEF. As independent legal entities subject to the laws of our countries and accountable to our Boards, National Committees are outside of the UNICEF management structure. We are instead connected to UNICEF through a unique and powerful agreement which makes us an integral part of the UNICEF ecosystem, and a main driver of results for children globally.

In fact, UNICEF's universal mandate is fulfilled by National Committees in 32 high-income countries and one middle-income country. National Committees are, in other words, the main engagement approach to contribute to results in favour of the most disadvantaged children in our countries. To have this recognition operationalized as part of the UNICEF Accountability System is a step in the direction of progress for every child.

This leads me to my second point.

As the ancient adage would say, with great power comes great responsibility, and National Committees are duty bearers.

As the report describes, National Committees are required to have in place policies and procedures to promote the protection and safeguarding of all children, and a commitment to minimize risks to children resulting from its operations, staff or partners. From their inception, National Committees have zero-tolerance for all forms of fraud and corruption. Moreover, Governance in National Committees is informed by a triple stringency test: firstly, National Committee policies and procedures are required to be no less stringent than those of UNICEF; secondly, they must abide by National Laws; thirdly, they follow best practices in the non-profit world.

National Committees are grateful to the UNICEF Executive Board for inviting us to offer an oral update about our work as part of the February 2023 session. We plan to offer more details about our role and mandate as part of this update, and we look forward to engaging with all member states and participants then.

Thank you!

Suzanne Laszlo

Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees

Executive Director of UNICEF Netherlands