

Executive Board of UNICEF

First Regular Session 2023

Item 12: Oral update on the work of the National Committees for UNICEF

February 7, 2023, New York

Thank you Madam President,

I deliver this joint statement on behalf of Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia , Estonia, Finland, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States and my own country, the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

We thank the Standing Group for this update on the work of UNICEF's National Committees. National Committees play an indispensable role in UNICEF's ecosystem and business model. Not only are they responsible for generating 20% of UNICEF's income, but they also play a key role in advocating for children's rights and in adding visibility to UNICEF's worldwide work. National Committees are UNICEF's eyes and ears in 33 high income countries: these committees engage with governments, children and youth activists, companies, entrepreneurs, foundations and civil society at large and amplify UNICEF's work and global mandate. These committees' engagement with municipalities in the frame of child friendly cities is only one example of how they have a profound and lasting impact on children's lives.

In the past, National Committees have contributed the largest share of UNICEF's regular resources income. In times where ODA is under increasing pressure, National Committees play an important part in helping UNICEF to stay ahead of the curve and to maximize regular resource income from individuals and corporate donors. During Covid-19, National Committees proved their versatility and readiness to quickly adapt to new developments in fundraising and successfully tested new approaches. The National Committees' capacity to innovate is one of UNICEF's biggest assets. *How can we create an environment where we enable the National Committees to test new and innovative approaches to fundraising, but where we also stay abreast of and manage the risks?* We need to jointly have this conversation.

A more regular exchange with the National Committees in terms of an annual oral update at the First Regular Session would be appreciated. A better understanding of the National Committees' role to generate income and to increase knowledge about innovative and alternative financing opportunities, and also review associated risks across UNICEF and its board, would be welcome.

Importantly, more frequent informal discussions between UNICEF management, the Executive Board, and the National Committees would also allow to tap more systematically into the National Committees' wealth of experience and expertise by promoting a child rights' agenda with partners from both the private and public sector, and could provide a blueprint for UNICEF country offices.

We look forward to continuing our engagement with UNICEF Management and the National Committees on how to leverage the National Committees' partnership model and innovation capacities to deliver results for children globally and to help accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at this critical time.