

AUSTRIA



PERMANENT MISSION OF AUSTRIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

UNICEF Executive Board - First Regular Session 2023

Item 2

Opening Statement by the President of the Executive Board

Opening Statement by the Executive Director

Statement by the Republic of Austria

New York, 7 February 2023

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Thank you, Madam President.

Allow me to start by welcoming the new Bureau of the Executive Board and congratulate you for assuming this important responsibility. As a new member of the Executive Board, we look forward to working with you and with the distinguished members of the Bureau.

We also would like to thank Executive Director Russell for her inspiring remarks. As you have outlined just now, as well as in last week's Coordination Segment, the effects on children from the multiple crises we are facing today have been devastating, including:

- over one billion children living at extremely high risk of experiencing more frequent, intense and destructive climate hazards,
- the global learning crisis which was further exacerbated by COVID-19 pandemic,
- and the disproportionate effect on children by armed conflict, including over 1.100 children killed or injured in the war in Ukraine.

In the face of these challenges, which may seem insurmountable at times, we commend UNICEF's steadfast engagement for the most vulnerable and to ensure that no child is left behind. We welcome UNICEF's active participation in upcoming processes, including the UN Water Summit and the SDG Summit. We are committed to build on our long-standing partnership and continue to support UNICEF's work both with core and non-core funding, including through our most recent contributions of 2 Mio. EUR each to UNICEF's Humanitarian Action for Children in Syria and Mali for 2023.

Let me also take this opportunity to highlight the important role of the National Committees, not only as an integral part of the UNICEF family, but also as partners for governments, civil society and many other stakeholders. The UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025 calls the entire UNICEF universe to be fully activated, which strongly entails National Committees as well. By mobilizing billions of USD as well as through their advocacy work, National Committees have contributed to advancing the rights of children and young people at the national, regional and global level. We look forward to the oral update on their work later this week and would welcome further opportunities of engagement in the future.

We will continue to work with you in implementing UNICEF's Strategic plan and assure you of our full support as we tackle the current crises and work together to get back on track and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you.