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PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

First Regular Session of UNICEF's Executive Board Item 6 (a): Update on UNICEF's humanitarian action New York, 9 February 2023

Madam President,

Madam Executive Director,

Distinguished colleagues,

At the outset, let me convey Greece's condolences to the Turkish and Syrian people for the loss of human lives and damage, as a result of the recent earthquakes.

Greece has already announced its emergency contribution to address the consequences of the earthquakes and provide humanitarian assistance to Turkiye and Syria through OCHA.

In reference to the agenda item under consideration, Greece aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Sweden, on behalf of a group of member-states, and would like to make some additional comments in its national capacity.

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In a world of ever-increasing hostility and insecurity, it is important to provide stability, assistance and comfort to all children in need.

Therefore, we express our unwavering support to UNICEF's humanitarian action and commend UNICEF for its commitment and dedication to alleviating the suffering of children in grave humanitarian situations. We also acknowledge the hard work of all implementing partners.

Greece, as a member of the Executive Board and as a country with its own UNICEF Country Program Document, is committed to the promotion of peace, cooperation and stability worldwide, given that these elements provide for conditions, conducive to the well-being of all children.

The protection of the Rights of the Child constitutes a priority for us, both at national and at international level.

At the national level, we are already drafting our 2nd National Action Plan on the Rights of the Child for the period 2024 – 2027.

At the same time, we find ourselves in the implementation period of UNICEF's innovative, 5-year Country Program for Greece, which is the first Program of its kind in a high-income country.

Given the results of the cooperation between UNICEF and Greece, we strongly believe that our Country Program could and should serve as a model for similar Programs in other high-income countries. In this regard, we remain available to share our experiences and know-how.

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Furthermore, Greece is always present wherever there is need, from Syria to the Sahel, contributing financially to UNICEF's projects on the ground.

In this framework, we have contributed 200,000 euros to UNICEF's programs for children in Ukraine. Apart from our financial contribution, we have provided and continue to provide hundreds of tons of essential medicines and supplies, both inside Ukraine and to Ukrainian refugees hosted in neighboring countries, in addition to hosting a considerable number of Ukrainian refugee families in Greece.

The grave humanitarian crisis in war-torn Ukraine, as well as in other regions of the world, affected by conflicts, climate change, natural disasters, poverty and food insecurity, is an issue of international concern; therefore, we should all step up our efforts to assist people, especially children in need, and make sure that we leave no child behind.

Thank you.