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Российской Федерации
при Организации
Объединенных Наций**

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**STATEMENT
by the representative of the Russian Federation
at the first regular session of the UNICEF Executive Board**

New York, 9 February 2023

Madam President,

We have studied with interest the Update on the humanitarian work of UNICEF. We welcome the Foundation's focus on applying a pragmatic approach to its humanitarian work, which, if successful, will allow us to work more effectively on the ground and respond promptly to emerging humanitarian crises.

Unfortunately, we have just witnessed once again attempts by a number of countries to politicize the discussion within the Executive Board. We consider this to be highly inappropriate. We will not dwell in detail on the root causes of the current crisis phenomena, in particular in the food and energy spheres. We will allow ourselves to note only some important points.

The states of the so-called "collective West" keep trying to shift responsibility for what is happening to Russia. In reality, the reasons for the turbulence on the food markets lie elsewhere. They are associated primarily with the short-sighted policies of the Western countries themselves. It is these countries that sharply "pumped" national financial systems with cheap money to fight the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, thus unbalancing global markets, including food markets.

Against the backdrop of the attempted forced energy transition, investments and lending to traditional energy extraction and processing sectors have significantly decreased. This led to an increase in energy prices and, as a consequence, the record cost of mineral fertilizers.

We are leaving aside the sanctions hysteria against our country, which has indeed led to significant economic distortions and the breakdown of traditional supply chains and logistics.

Russia is one of the largest agricultural powers in the world, making a significant contribution to global food security. Our country remains a responsible international supplier of food products. We are well aware of the importance of Russia food products for the socio-economic development and achievement of food security in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. Our fertilizers and raw materials for their production are also important. We realize that without those products, the future crops of many developing countries would be in jeopardy. That is why the the Russian leadership has undertaken a number is initiatives to transfer fertilizers and food to the poorest countries.

We should not forget about the worst. The Kiev regime's artillery strikes on the territories of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics and liberated areas of the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions are killing children. In 2022, 4,574 civilians were killed, including 153 children, and 279 children were wounded because of the actions of the Ukrainian armed forces. We consider these terrible figures absolutely unacceptable.

We take an active part in international efforts to normalize the humanitarian situation. I would remind you that Russia is the largest host country for refugees. Since the start of the special military operation, Russia has received 2,852,395 refugees. More than 9,500 temporary accommodation facilities are in operation in the regions of the Russian Federation and there are operational headquarters for work with evacuees, including regional children's ombudsmen. Individual work is carried out with all refugees, and they are promptly assisted in resolving various pressing issues related to

accommodation, provision of food and basic necessities, and the payment of social benefits.

Special attention is paid to families with minors, orphans and children left without parental care. Pre-schoolers are provided with places in kindergartens, and schoolchildren - in educational institutions of general and vocational education. Many of them are provided with targeted humanitarian and medical assistance, including psychological rehabilitation. The main aim is to help the children to forget all the horrors they have suffered in the previous eight years, when Kyiv, with the connivance of its Western sponsors, destroyed the peaceful population of Donbas with impunity.

We regularly carry out explanatory work on all the topics raised, including during open meetings of the United Nations Security Council. In addition, Russia, within its bilateral cooperation with UNICEF, ICRC and UNHCR, provides reliable information on measures being taken to prevent violations of international humanitarian law against children. We are ready to continue cooperation on an equal footing and are open for a constructive dialogue.

I thank you.