

## U.S. Remarks at UNICEF First Regular Session 2023

### Agenda Item 6a: UNICEF Humanitarian Action; UNICEF Humanitarian Action Update

- The United States welcomes the update and is encouraged by the implementation progress of the recommendations of the humanitarian review but is concerned about the reported 78 percent funding gap. What are UNICEF's specific plans and timelines to close this gap and to engage other stakeholders?
- We encourage UNICEF to continue its focus on risk analysis, preparedness, localization, and partnerships which are fundamental for quality, principled, and efficient responses in all humanitarian contexts.
- We welcome the update on nutrition. We note UNICEF's intent to monitor the expansion of national programs to include children with moderate forms of malnutrition and to look forward to supporting UNICEF and WFP in pursuit of the most effective approach to reaching these children.
- We commit to continuing our technical partnership to scale up nutrition support in the 15 most affected countries. We note and appreciate the stated commitment to more strategic collaboration, coordinated procurement, and improved coverage of service delivery.
- We are deeply worried about the delays of Ready to Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) and the lack of pipeline/delivery visibility. When does UNICEF plan to make available the promised information platform for the visibility and coordination of RUTF procurements which will allow all stakeholders to track progress?
- We welcome the inclusion of the Child Climate Risk Model, the novel WASH Severity Classification, and horizon scans in the update. We applaud UNICEF's use of these tools for evidence-based programming.
- We encourage UNICEF to continue strengthening coordination within the cluster system to ensure integrated programming across all sectors in humanitarian settings, and to develop and implement integrated strategies and action plans addressing humanitarian needs, sexual exploitation and abuse, and gender-based violence in emergencies.
- The United States looks forward to the release of UNICEF's new localization strategy, as working with and through local actors enables sustainable program outcomes.
- Emergencies evolve quickly, which is why we are deeply concerned that the humanitarian agenda item was absent from the second regular session. We strongly believe that a humanitarian update should be provided during every session of the Board. These are vital to report progress and stay abreast and agile of humanitarian needs and highlight UNICEF's critical work in fragile, conflict-affected and vulnerable contexts.
- To conclude, as Secretary Blinken said, the United States is determined to do all that we can to help those affected by the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria in the days, weeks, and months ahead. We would like to clarify that our Syria sanctions do not apply to activity that is humanitarian in nature. The U.S. government has longstanding humanitarian exemptions, exceptions, and authorization in our Syria sanctions that

allow for humanitarian assistance and early recovery activity that benefits the Syrian people.