



## UNICEF Executive Board – Annual Session

13 June 2023

### Item 8: Organizational Culture and Diversity

#### Delivered by Matthew Kelson, Adviser, Australian Mission to the United Nations

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Thank you, Chair.

Australia aligns with the statement delivered by Austria and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Australia appreciates the update provided by UNICEF on organizational culture and diversity. We note the progress made in this area and welcome UNICEF's commitment to further improvement.

In this context, we would like to commend UNICEF for adopting its Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy in December 2022. This is a welcome step in advancing the rights of children with disabilities across the globe, while also embedding disability inclusion at UNICEF through organizational change.



Disability equity is a cross-cutting priority of Australia's foreign policy. We are committed to working with persons with disabilities, and their representative organisations, and supporting persons with disabilities to be equal partners in their communities globally.

Currently, Australia is developing a new international disability equity and rights strategy. This will ensure that disability rights are an integral and integrated part of Australia's international engagement.

We also expect all partners to be progressing disability inclusion in all programs. We are grateful for the opportunity for a dialogue with UNICEF on this work and would like to raise the following points:

On UNICEF's **Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy**, we would be interested in how implementation has progressed since adoption. Have barriers to implementation been identified, and, if so, how they are being addressed?



We would also welcome further detail on the newly created **diversity, equity, and inclusion advisory group**. How is UNICEF supporting members of the DEI advisory group in carrying out this important work?

Finally, we note that there is an evaluation underway of UNICEF's **reasonable accommodation fund**. Australia would strongly encourage UNICEF to discuss its findings with the other UN agencies. We must ensure persons with disabilities across the UN System are supported to perform their duties effectively and can reach their full potential.

I thank you very much.

[345 words]