

Agenda Item 4

Annual Report on UNICEF Humanitarian Action

Chair, Madam Executive Director

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union as a donor.

We congratulate UNICEF and its staff for their humanitarian achievements in 2023, in a context marked by an unprecedented number of conflicts and climate-related crises.

At the end of 2023, UNICEF had received only 31 percent of UNICEF's total humanitarian requirement, with 86 percent coming from the public sector. The private sector contributed only 45 per cent of the amount raised in 2022, a year marked by substantial private donations due to the war in Ukraine. We would like to hear how, with such funding constraints, UNICEF has prioritized its humanitarian response. We also encourage UNICEF to continue building strong partnerships to collectively reduce humanitarian needs and address root causes, while promoting the humanitarian, development and peace nexus.

We support UNICEF's efforts to contribute to the transformation of the humanitarian system and notably deepen localisation by supporting local production and procuring more supplies locally, be it for medical or nutrition products. We also appreciate that UNICEF transferred 43 per cent of its humanitarian programming funds to local and national civil society organizations, including women-led organisations.

We welcome UNICEF's continued work on Accountability to Affected Populations and the technical and strategic support provided in 47 countries, and we encourage the linkages made at country level with efforts to support protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. We look forward to the roll-out of UNICEF's digital engagement strategy for accountability to affected populations this year and we encourage UNICEF to generalize the use of feedback mechanisms in its humanitarian response.

We strongly support UNICEF's continued efforts towards mainstreaming disability across sectors and providing targeted support when needed. We welcome that 75 per cent of country offices with Humanitarian Action for Children appeals included children with disabilities. We also congratulate UNICEF for strengthening its partnerships with local organizations of persons with disabilities.

We welcome UNICEF's close collaboration with WHO in the response to public health emergencies such as cholera, but also in its support to the development of WHO guidelines for the prevention and treatment of wasting in infants and young children. We strongly support the implementation of the new Guidelines and call for a smooth transition towards this new policy approach, in close cooperation with the WFP.

We welcome the finalisation of UNICEF's anticipatory action framework as well as the development of the Child Climate Risk Index, which should help country offices develop risk analysis and models which take into account children's specific vulnerability to climate crises, and invest in preparedness projects.

We welcome UNICEF's work on improving its Cluster lead function, in line with the recommendations of the latest evaluation, notably on gender-based violence, localization and inclusion.

We commend UNICEF's strengthening of its internal systems for the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. We welcome that 91 percent of country offices with a humanitarian response had reporting mechanisms in place and had ensured capacity building for their partners. We encourage UNICEF to continue supporting the inter-agency humanitarian systems to generate data and evidence to track and monitor collective PSEA results.

Thank you.