

UNICEF Executive Board Annual Session 2024 Agenda Items 2 and 3

National statement delivered by Ambassador Christina Markus Lassen, Permanent Representative of Denmark to the United Nations

Mister President, Madame Executive Director, Excellencies,

Firstly, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for the work of UNICEF staff and implementing partners, who continue to deliver for every child despite difficult circumstances.

The midterm review of the Strategic Plan and the Executive Director's Annual Report underscores the immense and multifaceted challenges we continue to face. Protracted crises, climate change and the rapid development of new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence present challenges to children worldwide and to the delivery of UNICEF's mandate and.

[Humanitarian action and UNDS reform]

We are deeply concerned by reports of the highest-ever numbers of verified grave violations against children recorded in 2023. UNICEF remains a **key humanitarian partner for Denmark** in addressing the needs of millions of children around the world, especially in improving girls' and adolescent girls' rights and access to quality education and protection.

We underscore the paramount importance of collaborative efforts and thinking across the development-humanitarian nexus. A **more integrated, coherent, efficient and results-driven UN presence on the ground**, led by the UN Resident Coordinators, plays an important part in ensuring the UN system including UNICEF delivers for every child.

We encourage UNICEF to show leadership at country level and to continue to **work closely with sister agencies, NGOs and local partners**.

We also recognize that the **flexible nature of core resources is essential for UNICEF's ability to deliver your mandate**, particularly in light of increasingly complex, humanitarian and conflict settings.

[Results – WASH and Education]

Madame Executive Director,

We commend UNICEF for the strong delivery of results in some areas, including its contribution to achieving remarkable results on **reducing under-five mortality rates** by more than half over the past three decades.

We hope to see greater progress in the second half of the implementation of the Strategic Plan toward achieving systemic outcome and impact level indicators. We noted that two crucial areas for driving systemic change: **education and WASH, remain underfunded and under-prioritized**.

These areas are key priorities for our partnership with UNICEF. Both have a multiplier effect on sustainable development broadly, which is why we provide flexible, multi-year to the **thematic funds on education and WASH**. Denmark is also proud to host the innovative WASH Hub in the UN City in Copenhagen.

For this reason, we **commend the newly launched Sustainability and Climate Change Action Plan** and look forward to reviewing the progress of the plan, including in the area of WASH.

We welcome further details on how UNICEF plans to mitigate the funding gap in these two areas and on the ambition to deepen partnerships with private sector and IFIs in the area of WASH?

Thank you.

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