



Permanent Representation of the Kingdom of Belgium
to the United Nations
in **New York**

One Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza
885 Second Avenue, 41st Floor
New York, NY 10017
T +1 212 378 63 00
newyorkun@diplobel.fed.be
newyorkun.diplomatie.belgium.be

UNICEF Executive Board Annual Session 2024

Item 3. Report on the midterm review of the UNICEF Strategic Plan and Annual Report of the Executive Director

11 June 2024

Statement delivered by Ambassador Karl Lagatie, Chargé d'affaires, a.i.

Mr. President,
Madame Executive Director,

Belgium would like to thank UNICEF for the midterm review of its strategic plan and the annual report. We live in challenging times, where half the world's children are put at extreme risk by climate change and the disastrous effects of war on children are higher than ever. SDG progress is in need of effective acceleration. Despite these challenges, we applaud the steady progress sustained in the areas of immunization and basic water, sanitation and hygiene services.

As a way forward to ignite SDG acceleration we agree wholeheartedly that the solution doesn't consist of a mere demand for investment in programmes, but much rather a demand for global reprioritization of the rights and the needs of children. In this light, we welcome specific and comprehensive actions proposed in the areas of health, nutrition and education to address current gaps.

The strong analytical and evidence-based orientation towards policy and programmes, through continuous cycles of evaluation demonstrates the critical approach we hold so dearly, strengthening the implementation of UNICEF's 2022 – 2025 Strategic Plan in an increasingly resource-constrained landscape.

We applaud UNICEF's attention to broader UN Development System Reform and more specifically to proactive cooperation with other UN funds, programmes and agencies. The steady increase in the amount of country representatives reaffirming that the "One UN" approach under leadership of the UN Resident Coordinators actually benefits children, strengthens this argument. As such we encourage UNICEF to continue proactively working together with the broader UN Development System. In this light we'd be open to hear your thoughts on how we can overcome inter-agency funding competition and the genuine integration of work.

In its increasing humanitarian work we applaud UNICEF with the "leave no one behind" policy in practice by providing humanitarian relief to those who need it most. Children in Gaza and Ukraine, Afghanistan, the DRC, Haiti, Sudan and many more are among the most affected victims of conflict. We remain grateful to the humanitarian staff working on the frontlines.

As a committed partner in multiannual qualitative core funding for UNICEF, we are proud fall within the top-20 resource partners for regular resources once again. This demonstrates furthermore the trust we have in the robustness of UNICEF's engagement with oversight mechanisms. In an unfortunate and continued declining trend of flexible and qualitative funding in an ever-more challenging budgetary context, we believe that this remains a best practice to financing the UN Development System. Let me assure you , Madame. Executive Director, that UNICEF will remain a crucial and trusted partner of Belgium in ensuring that no child is left behind.

I thank you.

