

Mr. President, Madam Executive Director,

Norway commends the results achieved by UNICEF in 2023. Yet another difficult year for children globally, with multiple and protracted crisis. Results of UNICEF on the ground, in a number of different areas, both impressive and important. In particular commend strengthening of national health and education systems, and the integration of children with disabilities. The high achievements are due to committed and talented staff. Encourage UNICEF maintain focus on organizational culture, to ensure a culture of trust among all staff, regardless of gender, race, and sexual orientation.

Mid term review presented to the Board at this session presents an opportunity to look backwards at the results achieved, and to look forwards both to the remaining years of the current strategic plan and to the new plan that will be developed through the course of next year. The coming plan will be the last before 2030. Would have welcomed more thorough analyses of what has been achieved and of where the potential for improvement lies. Encourage UNICEF to continue to set ambitious targets to reach every child everywhere.

Setting and reaching ambitious targets is not possible without taking risks. We as Board members and as contributing countries must stand ready to engage openly on which risks exist, if and how they can be mitigated, and at which cost. We commend UNICEF for leading by example, establishing enterprise risk management clearly and consistently on the agenda of the Board.

With its dual humanitarian and development mandate, UNICEF is uniquely positioned to ensure a whole of system approach, not least at country level. We commend the continued efforts of UNICEF in furthering the localization agenda, and in increasing the efforts in mainstreaming of children with disabilities and against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

Increased efforts rely on increased collaboration. Recognize significant efforts of UNICEF in collaborating with other organizations, and in following up on UN reform. We would have welcomed more coherent reporting on joint efforts. As we are preparing for the upcoming QCPR, look forward to continuing dialogue on how can best ensure an incentive structure that makes sure reform is not only the best for the system, but for each organization and each unit.

Collaboration not only with other members of the UN family, but with members of the board. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss, within the framework of the assessment conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit, how we can work better together.

You can count on our continued support.

Thank you.