

## **Agenda Item 10**

### **UNICEF Strategic Plan: updated financial estimates, 2026–2029**

Chair, Madam Executive Director

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

We take note of the updated financial estimates for the current Strategic Plan, an important tool to guide UNICEF actions towards 2030.

We appreciate that UNICEF has revised its estimates based on 2025 income and has been conservative in its forecast for 2026-2029. However, in light of continued funding constraints, we would welcome UNICEF's assessment of the likelihood that the projected income of \$6.46 billion for 2026, which remains close to the originally planned level, will be realised by the end of the year. We would also be interested in hearing UNICEF's views on how the Executive Board/donors can most usefully support these efforts in the current context.

We note that in 2025, due to a very challenging funding environment, the evaluation function suffered from worrying cuts and pressure on evaluation coverage and independence. While we welcome that the proposed budgets for the Evaluation Office and Pooled Fund remain unchanged from what was presented to the Executive Board in September 2025, we wish to stress again the importance of a solid and independent evaluation function, especially in a context of significant

organisational reforms. We encourage UNICEF to maintain its target allocation towards evaluation at 1 per cent of the programme expenditure.

We welcome the continued implementation of the Future Focus Initiative and UNICEF's efforts to increase efficiency and proximity to programme delivery. As the figures contained in the document before the Board have not been updated since March 2026, we would welcome reassurance that the operationalisation of the FFI has progressed as planned in 2026 and that the projected savings remain on track to be achieved.

Despite significant funding challenges, we trust that this Strategic Plan will serve as an important vehicle for advancing towards the 2030 objectives. We are encouraged by UNICEF's continued efforts to broaden partnerships with new donors and to consolidate its private donor base, which is particularly important in a context of constrained public funding.

The European Union has been and will remain a major donor to UNICEF and we look forward to continuing working with you to deliver a better future for children.

Thank you.