Joint Statement
Second Regular Session 2021
Executive Board of UNICEF
7 September 2021

Delivered by New Zealand Permanent Representative, Craig Hawke
Mr President, Executive Director

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the following cross-regional group of Member States: Australia; Austria; Belgium; Bulgaria; Canada; Chile; Colombia; Costa Rica; Czech Republic; Denmark; the EU as a donor; El Salvador; Finland; France; Gambia; Georgia; Germany; Greece; Iceland; India; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Latvia; Liberia; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Mexico; Morocco; the Netherlands; Nigeria; Norway; Republic of Korea; Slovenia; South-Africa; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Turkey; Ukraine; United Kingdom; United States; and my own country, New Zealand.

Executive Director, we welcome your opening remarks and commend you and UNICEF staff worldwide, for the determination and progress made in implementing the current Strategic Plan despite the challenges presented by COVID-19.

The pandemic has exposed the vulnerabilities and exacerbated inequalities within and between countries, hitting the poorest and most vulnerable hardest.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has also disrupted progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and in some areas reversed hard-won progress.
This reality demands that we develop new approaches to overcome the current and future obstacles in the way of achieving the 2030 Agenda and building back better.

The adoption of a new Strategic Plan 2022-2025 is both timely and imperative.

We appreciate the consultative and transparent process towards the development of your new Plan.

We recognize that the Strategic Plan is an agency owned document, and in this regard, that it does not fully capture all concerns and priorities of the various member states, including those who have joined this statement.

Nevertheless, we believe that the plan serves as a global framework that will enable UNICEF, as the penholder of the Strategic Plan, to best fulfill its mandate and support countries in delivering on their national development needs and priorities.
In line with the ongoing reforms of the UN Development System, we strongly encourage UNICEF to work in close cooperation with the other agencies, funds and programmes of the UN Sustainable Development Group, and other relevant UN entities, to align programming with the country-specific Cooperation Frameworks, in close consultation with national Governments, to adequately respond to country needs and priorities.

In conclusion, we reiterate our commitment to UNICEF and stand ready to support the agency in the delivery of its mandate.

Towards this end, we look forward to adopting a decision endorsing the new Strategic Plan 2022-2025 at this Board Session.

I thank you.