

**Annual Session of the UNICEF Executive Board  
14 - 17 June 2022**

*Check against delivery*

**Intervention by the Chair of the Standing Group of National  
Committees to Item 3: Annual report for 2021 of the Executive  
Director of UNICEF**

Mr President, Executive Director Russell, distinguished delegates, National Committee colleagues,

The magnitude of the multiple challenges faced by children this past year is daunting. Conflict, climate change, covid, poverty, inequality have slowed down progress in the achievement of the SDGs and posed a great threat to the rights of children everywhere. In the comprehensive report of the Executive Director, we can clearly see both the achievements and the negative impact these challenges had on our 5 goal areas, humanitarian and gender action plans.

But in the midst of it all, UNICEF has been a beacon of hope for every child. Thanks to UNICEF's global footprint and presence in over 190 countries and territories, 33 of them in the form of National Committees, we were able to unite and innovate like

never before, offering our diversity, our expert skills and our services to our common cause.

National Committees are side-by-side with UNICEF in the pursuit of our common goals. We collectively generate massive unrestricted funds from our constituencies and leverage influence and social capital to support UNICEF's universal mandate and the child rights agenda.

At a time when problems are rarely contained or defined by borders, we have advocated and joined forces with our governments and with our supporters so that child survival, health, growth, development, education, child protection, access to a safe and clean environment and equity were a reality to every child. Our primary focus continues to be on the children who are most vulnerable and in need of help. The geography of the vulnerability and need is what has been changing, urging us to adapt, better coordinate and elevate the calibre of our response.

National Committees applaud UNICEF for looking into new ways to reinvigorate multilateralism, for increasing engagement with partners in meaningful ways and for raising the level of our ambition for children in the new Strategic Plan. We look forward to continuing to contribute to this conversation and to exploring further ways we can collaborate and innovate even further for the benefit of every child, everywhere.

Thank you!

Suzanne Laszlo

Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees

Executive Director of UNICEF Netherlands