

→ Joint – cross-board – statement on PSEAH  
UNICEF Annual Session 2022  
Delivered by Amb. Hyunjoo OH, DPR of the Permanent Mission of the  
Republic of Korea

**Thank you, mister president,**

I am speaking on behalf of Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, the Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Türkiye, Ukraine, the UK, the US, Uruguay, and the EU as a donor and my own country, the Republic of Korea.

**Mister president,** since the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment is not a separate agenda item for the UNICEF Annual Session, we believe the agenda item of the Executive Director's Annual Report is an opportune moment to speak about this topic that is of great importance. To us, but also to the thousands of employees, implementing partners and beneficiaries of all UN agencies. We recognize the commitment and efforts of UNICEF to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation, abuse and sexual harassment, and to work towards an environment that prohibits sexual misconduct.

We reiterate our zero tolerance for SEAH and welcome the progress that has been made, but also acknowledge that whilst much has improved, significant challenges remain.

We thank UNICEF for its efforts in responding to ongoing global and humanitarian crises, including in Ukraine, Afghanistan and other regions,

where we know there are major SEAH risks, particularly for women and girls. We urge UNICEF to continue to address and mitigate these; and to work together to ensure an effective, coordinated response.

Once again we stress the importance of:

- strong, proactive and visible leadership in the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment;
- effective inter-agency collaboration;
- awareness and implementation of PSEAH policies and standards by leadership, staff, implementing partners and the wider public;
- building capacity;
- training tools and accountability of implementing partners;
- accessible, safe and accountable reporting and follow-up – including at the country level;
- effective and transparent screening of all staff;
- and a strengthened human-rights based, gender-responsive and victim/survivor-centered approach, including to investigations, which all contribute to prioritizing the rights and dignity of the victims/survivors.

**Mister president**, we welcome continued opportunities to learn about the impact of UNICEF's prevention and response efforts at the local, country, regional and global levels. We are especially interested in how PSEAH will be better monitored and embedded further in country offices, supported and strengthened with implementing partners and effectively coordinated with all partners, particularly at the field level; as well as the further implementation of the principles of a victim/survivor centered approach, including safety, confidentiality, respect and non-discrimination. We welcome any reflections on this by UNICEF.

We reiterate the importance of further strengthening transparency and reporting to Member States in line with agreed terms. We would also be happy to hear how UNICEF is strengthening access to victim/survivor-centered justice.

Finally, there is much to gain for the UN system as a whole when we address SEA and SH in a coherent, system-wide manner and cooperate, rather than having each agency pursue its own approach. The issues facing us all are complex and challenging and require a sustained multistakeholder effort, including from Member States and the UN System. It is important that we are all working towards the same collective vision in order to drive transformational, systemic, gender-responsive and sustained change.

Thank you.