

Agenda Item 4

National statement to be delivered by Martin Rosén, Counsellor, Swedish Delegation

Mister President, Madam Executive Director,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

The last few years have been characterized by multiple shocks, pushing humanitarian needs to record levels. We would like to thank all UNICEF staff for your tireless work to provide those in need with life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection under very challenging circumstances. Sweden is very pleased with UNICEF's engagement to improve humanitarian access and to advocate for those most in need.

In 2022, we note with concern that crises across the globe are deepening and proliferating. Conflict, climate change and covid-19 remain the main drivers of this trend, which put more people in situations of vulnerability.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has added further pressure on an overstretched humanitarian system.

All children have equal rights – protection, basic hygiene and education are not luxuries but necessities. This includes children in conflict settings. We commend UNICEF's role in assisting those children. Your efforts on child protection and preventing GBV is vital. Sweden appreciates that UNICEF is moving towards a centrality of protection approach, while considering associated risks. **We would like to ask how UNICEF is working to address the issue of forcible deportation of children in conflict settings.**

We also commend UNICEF's work to mitigate the direct and indirect consequences of the pandemic, not least in the roll-out of the Covax facility at the country level. It is now vital that UNICEF assist countries in building preparedness and resilience to help them cope with possible future pandemics.

As one of the central humanitarian actors and an organization with a dual mandate, it is important that UNICEF takes the lead in strengthening collaboration and coordination between humanitarian and development work.

It is vital to put those affected at the heart of humanitarian action and to fully adhere to the humanitarian principles. Humanitarian allocations should be made based exclusively on needs assessments. Our support to the people of Ukraine must not come at the expense of other humanitarian crises. That is why we need more flexible – both multiannual and unearmarked – funding. Sweden is therefore pleased to have a new agreement with UNICEF with over 300 million USD for 2022-2025 in largely unearmarked funding.

In the Annual report on humanitarian action, Sweden would appreciate more elaborate reporting on gender equality and how a gender perspective is integrated and mainstreamed beyond GBV and Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment.

Finally, we would like to encourage UNICEF to continue its work to optimize its humanitarian action through increased coordination, at country-level and globally, as an essential part of the overarching humanitarian system, and through continued and strengthened implementation of UNDS reform. The UN is stronger together.

Thank you.