

U.S. Remarks
UNICEF Executive Board Annual Session
June 14-17, 2022

Item 4a – UNICEF Humanitarian Action

- The United States welcomes the annual report on UNICEF’s humanitarian action and UNICEF’s plans to apply key lessons learned to improve humanitarian responses. We note the strong results achieved for children in humanitarian settings around the world, as humanitarian needs continue to grow.
- The United States commends UNICEF staff for “staying and delivering” and for efforts to improve the capacity and skills of UNICEF staff. Your investment and training of humanitarian leaders through the development of a framework, the Humanitarian Leadership Workshop, and other training courses, shows your commitment to preparing staff to lead complex responses in evolving humanitarian contexts globally.
- We also commend UNICEF for delivering robust humanitarian assistance while adapting and responding to the needs of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, food insecurity and conflict.
- We appreciate UNICEF Supply Division’s efforts to deliver more than 1.5 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines as the logistics partner for COVAX.
- We were encouraged to see references to the implementation of the Humanitarian Review recommendations and are curious to know more about the priorities for the additional funding UNICEF is seeking to implement the remaining recommendations from the Humanitarian Review. We would like to understand if other donors have considered the investment case presented in February.
- We note and welcome the organization’s focus on localized humanitarian responses and are encouraged by the results reported on localization. We support UNICEF in these efforts and look forward with interest to its new strategy on localization, including how it can strengthen the coherence between its humanitarian and development programming.
- We welcome your efforts to improve accountability to affected populations and to advance protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment (SEAH), described in the Report, and recognize UNICEF’s commitment to ensuring programming is safe and accessible for those we are meant to serve.
 - What has UNICEF prioritized in its work to ensure that SEAH risk analysis, SEAH community risk mapping, safe and accessible reporting mechanisms, and survivor centered SEAH response systems are in place across its systems and operations?

Item 4b – COVID-19

- The United States remains committed to ending the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to help countries build back better. We appreciate governments participating in the Global COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership (CoVDP); and thank UNICEF for its role in this unprecedented global effort.

- To date, the U.S. has provided over \$19 billion for COVID-19 health, humanitarian, and economic support globally. Through our Initiative for Global Vaccine Access (Global VAX), we are working with countries worldwide to turn “vaccines in vials” into “vaccinations in arms.” The U.S. has provided, in partnership with COVAX and bilaterally, over half a billion COVID-19 vaccines to 115 countries and has announced that it will provide \$1.7 billion for vaccine readiness.
- On May 12, we made additional announcements at the 2nd Global COVID-19 Summit that we co-hosted with Belize, Germany, Indonesia, and Senegal. The Summit generated over \$3 billion in new financial commitments and multiple policy commitments, including actions to address bottlenecks noted in CoVDP’s progress update. But more investments and sustained country leadership are needed.
We commend the CoVDP and countries on the increased vaccine coverage achieved since January. But we also note that progress has been uneven. Of particular concern is the slow progress among countries with the lowest coverage as well as the low coverage of healthcare workers, the elderly, and those with comorbidities. We urge CoVDP to continue focusing attention on these critical gaps, and ensuring delivery to those at most risk of infection, including in humanitarian settings.
- We appreciate CoVDP’s recommendations and key areas of support needed to accelerate progress, including the need to invest in primary health care and sustainable local and regional production capacities. We also recognize the limited window of opportunity we have to significantly boost COVID-19 vaccine uptake, as countries face competing priorities, including increased maternal and child mortality, disruption of routine immunization, measles outbreaks, and the re-emergence of polio, as well as growing food insecurity and malnutrition.
- We appreciate UNICEF prioritizing these issues and urge partners to ensure that COVID-19 response and vaccination investments help strengthen routine immunization and critical health and nutrition services, which have been disrupted by the pandemic. We encourage UNICEF and partners to look for ways to leverage existing global vaccine delivery capacities, such as polio vaccination platforms, to speed COVID-19 vaccine administration.
- Expanding vaccination coverage will accelerate the end of the pandemic and the recovery of all countries. Overcoming this unprecedented challenge requires an equally unprecedented level of global solidarity. We urge all member states and partners to stay the course with us and build on the vital momentum achieved to date.