

U.S. National Statement
UNICEF Executive Board Annual Session
June 14, 2022

Item 3 – UNICEF Annual Report

Delivered by U.S. Representative to ECOSOC, Ambassador Lisa Carty

Thank you, Ambassador Carazo and Executive Director Russell for your remarks.

While the Board gathers in person for the first time in more than two years, children and youth around the world face mounting challenges, including hunger and water scarcity; violence, exploitation, abuse, neglect, and other forms of harm; displacement due to conflict; among many others lack of quality education or learning due to disruptions from war, conflict, and epidemics; mental health challenges; extreme poverty. The vulnerability of our children cannot be overstated.

UNICEF's commitment to children and youth - no matter the region, gender, and race - is unsurpassed. As we work together to address these challenges for our children, you can count on the United States and its strong partnership with UNICEF.

The United States takes this opportunity to highlight four areas of UNICEF's critical ongoing work:

- First, as UNICEF works to address complex and large-scale challenges, including in Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa, we now face a new humanitarian and refugee crisis provoked by Russia's unlawful invasion of Ukraine. Russia's war of choice in Ukraine has exacerbated global food insecurity, sharply increased food and fuel prices, created mass displacement, and disrupted the global supply chain. At a time that the world is working to build back from the pandemic and restore years of lost education for children, we thank UNICEF for supporting vulnerable children in the context of this dire conflict.
- Second, we appreciate UNICEF's contributions and dedication to combatting the COVID-19 pandemic in coordinating the COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership and the unprecedented global effort to distribute and deliver more than one billion COVID-19 vaccines.
- Third, we applaud UNICEF's efforts on the ground to promote and protect the rights of children with disabilities and call on UNICEF to continue implementing UN Security Council Resolution 2475. This is especially relevant as we are in the middle of the Conference of States parties on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- Fourth, we thank UNICEF for its leadership in treating children experiencing severe wasting. Malnutrition can have decades-long effects and intergenerational impacts on children's development. We thank UNICEF for prioritizing programs to combat all forms of malnutrition.
- Fifth, we commend UNICEF's efforts to address climate change and environmental degradation, which compromise children's well-being and contribute to food and water insecurity.

To close, the United States calls on UN agencies and the UN system to:

- Strengthen governance, ethics, evaluation, audit and internal investigation functions; ensure whistleblower protections meet appropriate standards; and provide timely, transparent, and comprehensive updates to the executive boards throughout the year. We urge sustained momentum and long-term commitment to building safer, more supportive workplaces, including strengthening accountability structures for protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.
- Prioritize gender equality. As the United States mainstreams our commitment to gender equality across our foreign and domestic policy through the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality, we look forward to partnering throughout the UN system to empower children and youth regardless of gender and race and ensure no child is left behind.

Thank you.