

## **Agenda Item 4**

### **Annual Report on UNICEF Humanitarian Action**

Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union as a donor.

We appreciate the commitment of the staff of UNICEF and its partner organizations, who are faced with an increasingly complex operating environment. The war in Ukraine alone affected 27 million people, of whom 7 million children, and had a massive impact on the global nutrition crisis. Despite constraints on supply chains and rising costs, we note that the UNICEF Supply Division delivered a record level of life-saving supplies to children in emergencies in 2022.

We welcome the 43 per cent increase in humanitarian funding compared to 2021, including a doubled contribution from the private sector. However, this represents only 36 percent of UNICEF's total humanitarian requirement. We would therefore be interested to hear how UNICEF has prioritized its humanitarian response and what efforts have been undertaken, also jointly with other UN organizations, for advocacy and outreach. In parallel, we encourage UNICEF to further work on building strong and effective partnerships to collectively reduce humanitarian needs and address root causes, and to promote the humanitarian, development and peace building nexus.

We strongly support UNICEF's efforts to include children with disabilities in all stages of its response and welcome the results achieved in 2022. We appreciate in particular the roll out of the Disability-Inclusive Humanitarian Action Tool Kit as well as UNICEF's lead role in inter-agency efforts to strengthen disability inclusion in humanitarian response plans.

We welcome UNICEF's instrumental role as co-chair of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against children as well as UNICEF's overall work for children in war. We would be interested in what UNICEF considered the biggest challenge for children in armed conflicts in 2022.

We welcome UNICEF's scaled-up efforts on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse throughout its programmes and operations and appreciate that 89 percent of country offices with a humanitarian response had reporting systems fully in place in 2022. We encourage UNICEF to continue supporting the inter-agency humanitarian systems to generate data and evidence to track and monitor collective PSEA results. We reiterate our zero tolerance approach. In this context, we encourage the setting up of easily accessible instances which are adapted to the local context, to whom allegations can be reported, ensuring a victim/survivor-centered approach and follow-up.

We note that in 2022, UNICEF elevated climate action as a priority and decided to accelerate the response to the effects of climate change in humanitarian contexts. We welcome UNICEF's commitment to integrate sustainability in its humanitarian interventions.

We also welcome UNICEF's advocacy role for child-responsive refugee and migration responses, in particular the recently launched strategic partnership with UNHCR to advance cooperation.

We appreciate the new UNICEF strategy on Accountability to Affected Populations and the support provided in this respect to the responses in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and Ukraine. We strongly encourage UNICEF to enlarge technical support to all its offices and generalize the use of feedback mechanisms in its humanitarian response, including joint feedback mechanisms. We appreciate UNICEF's commitment to global and inter-agency efforts to increase the localization of humanitarian response as well as its co-chairing of the IASC Task Force on Localization.

We thank UNICEF for its update on the Management response to the evaluation of the UNICEF role as cluster lead/co-lead agency and note the progress already made. We invite UNICEF to focus on efforts at the inter-agency level. We would be interested to know when the analysis of areas of IASC cluster guidance which need updating will be conducted, since the evaluation identified this point as a priority, together with the need to produce guidance on cluster transition in line with the Nexus approach.

Thank you.