

Statement by H.E. Sangjin Kim
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the
United Nations
The 2023 Annual Session of the UNICEF Executive Board
10:00 - 13:00, Tuesday, 13 June 2023

Madame President,

I would like to thank Executive Director Russell for her comprehensive briefing on the key achievements made by UNICEF in 2022. I commend the unwavering commitment of your team in ensuring the realization of the rights of every child and making a tangible difference for children.

Madame President,

It is disheartening to acknowledge the sobering reality of the current polycrisis that has resulted in significant setbacks in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. We indeed find ourselves at a critical juncture, one where we must unite our common efforts to mitigate the adverse effects of such global challenges and ensure a sustainable future for all children.

In this light, my delegation would like to highlight the following three points.

First, UNDS reform. The Korean Government encourages UNICEF to advance UNDS reform with ownership. Promoting the collective work of achieving the SDGs across the UN System is at the heart of the reform to deliver development results on the ground. In this regard, we

request UNICEF to utilize the checklist as a tool to track the reform progress and to fully implement the Management and Accountability Framework. We also urge UNICEF to leverage its comparative advantage to improve efficient use of resources among UN agencies.

Second, the HDP Nexus. We appreciate UNICEF's efforts on prioritizing the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP Nexus) across country programmes. Intensifying humanitarian crisis, such as food insecurity in the Horn of Africa, highlights the need to coherently address the drivers of humanitarian challenges to build resilience towards sustainable peace.

While our Government will continue its commitment in providing humanitarian assistance, with our most recent pledge of \$2.3 million USD towards the Horn of Africa, we look forward to UNICEF's enhanced coordination on the Nexus approach to deliver results for children.

In this regard, what are the areas of improvement for UNICEF to link humanitarian and development programming to fulfill its dual mandate?

Lastly, improving access to education by addressing the digital divide. We note with concern the slower progress on ensuring access to quality learning opportunities, as the progress rate has fallen below to 90% in 2022 from 105% in 2021. Children living in remote and rural areas, particularly, continue to face barriers in accessing schools that further exacerbate the learning loss from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this context, leveraging digital technology can provide equitable access to education in all contexts. Moreover, implementing digital

learning tools is a gateway to foster lifelong digital literacy and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills that empower children in a digital world.

In this light, ROK would like to hear the strategies UNICEF has in place to narrow the digital divide as a solution to ensure that every child has an opportunity to receive quality education.

In closing, I would like to reiterate our full support for the essential work of UNICEF to leave no child behind.

I thank you. /END/

(Time limit: 3 mins)