

UNICEF Executive Board, Annual Session 13-16 June 2023

Remarks from the floor

Delivered by Ms Tove Wennergren, MFA, Sweden

Agenda item 4 – Humanitarian report

Madam President,

Thank you for giving me the floor and for allowing me to make some additional remarks on behalf of Sweden. Let me start by thanking for an excellent presentation and to commend UNICEF for your tireless work under challenging circumstances, where you have been able to reach the most vulnerable with life-saving support. The response in Ukraine, Afghanistan, Yemen, and the Horn of Africa, but also in support of the people affected by the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria, shows UNICEF's valuable role in new emergencies as well as in protracted crises. Sweden would like to underline the importance of UNICEF continuing to be a principled and needs-based humanitarian actor. We would also like to stress that children's security and human rights is key in any crisis and that child protection should form part of the response in all humanitarian clusters.

We commend that UNICEF has been able to strengthen its work with localization through several initiatives and your strengthened focus on accountability towards affected populations. It is central that UNICEF integrate these initiatives on all level of its work, in accordance with Grand Bargain.

Sweden appreciates UNICEFs work to strengthen nexus between humanitarian action, development, and peacebuilding, in line with the conclusions from the

evaluation in 2021. UNICEF, with its double mandate, is very well placed to work in nexus. Initiatives focussing on anticipatory and early action, nexus, and resilience, are highly relevant. Work in the development area can prevent humanitarian needs long term.

Given that the humanitarian needs are increasing and funding shrinking, what is UNICEF's strategy to fund increased efforts within early warning and early action? How will the mandate of lifesaving be safeguarded while at the same time creating resilience within affected communities and systems for early warning?

Let me end by commending UNICEF also for improving the protection against sexual exploitation and abuse in humanitarian contributions through the strengthening of reporting mechanisms. How can UNICEF strengthen this even more? The rights of women and girls, and a gender perspective, should be a point of departure in all humanitarian responses.