



REPUBLIC OF POLAND
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Second Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board

Item 5: Oral update on UNICEF humanitarian action

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Krzysztof Szczerski
Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations**

New York, 6 September 2023

Madam President,

Poland welcomes the oral update on UNICEF humanitarian action and we thank Ms. Wreikat for her insightful presentation.

And, as always, a sincere thank you to the brave and dedicated staff members of UNICEF, who work tirelessly in the increasingly difficult and dangerous situations across the globe, striving to deliver life-preserving and life-enhancing aid to every vulnerable child.

We congratulate UNICEF on the results achieved for children thus far, despite 2023 being another year of tremendous challenges. Notably, we recognize UNICEF's proactive approach in engaging with local entities, championing their involvement and active participation in the orchestration of responses to crises.

Being the host country for the UNICEF Emergency Response Office in Warsaw, we are first-hand witnesses to the endeavours the Fund undertakes to incorporate Polish civil society organizations, municipalities and other local actors in the humanitarian undertakings for Ukraine.

Madam President,

While we are gravely concerned about the worsening humanitarian situation globally, let me focus on Ukraine, a crisis closest to home, that intimately affects my own nation.

We applaud the life-saving assistance provided by UNICEF to the children and families who sought refuge from Russia's full-scale aggression against Ukraine in neighbouring countries, including my own.

In this context, I wish to commend prompt establishment of the Emergency Response Office in Poland in March 2022.

Acknowledging the pivotal contribution of this Office to the welfare of Ukrainian families displaced by conflict to Poland and our neighbours from the region, it is my pleasure to announce that the Government of Poland has decided to allocate an amount of one million one hundred thousand Polish zlotys (1 100 000 PLN) in support of its endeavours, which is an amount about five times bigger than Poland's total contribution to UNICEF last year. We hope that it will provide UNICEF with the resources it needs to continue its ongoing relief efforts for Ukrainian children and their families.

I would also like to mention that in a joint initiative with Canada, we have recently inaugurated a Group of Friends on Children and Armed Conflict, headquartered in Kyiv, currently comprising 29 Member States. Its primary objective is to harmonize with the Ukrainian Government on strengthening its efforts to protect and aid all children. It also aims at coordinating diplomatic, civil society, and international initiatives, and to jointly advocate for the rights of children. Our aspiration is for this platform to serve as a conduit to ensure that the needs of every Ukrainian child are attentively met.

To conclude, *Madam President*, Poland would like to reiterate our strong support to UNICEF for its tireless work in protecting the rights of all children.

Thank you.