



**First Regular Session 2024 of UNICEF's Executive Board**  
**Item 2 (a): Opening statements by the President of the EB and the Executive Director of UNICEF**

**Statement delivered by Ms. Sonia Bruck, Vice-Chair of the Board of SOS Children's Villages Brazil, on behalf of SOS Children's Villages**

Mr. President,  
Madame Executive Director,  
Distinguished Members of the Executive Board,  
Civil Society colleagues,

My name is Sonia Bruck, Vice-Chair of the Board of SOS Children's Villages Brazil. SOS Children's Villages is an NGO working in over 135 countries and territories. We work to keep families together and prevent unnecessary child-family separation, and when families cannot cope, we work to ensure the right to care, and protection is met through quality alternative care options for all children.

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We thank Madame Executive Director for her statement and echo that although there has been progress on SDG key indicators related to children, a lot more needs to be done to meet the 2030 Agenda. Increased levels of poverty and devastating humanitarian crises, such as those in Gaza and Sudan, have permanently devastated the lives of many children and their families.

How are we going to cope with the long-term situation of thousands of children without family support? Where are they going to go and who will care for them?

We need to start planning for this now.

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On the negotiations for the Pact for the Future: we urge Member States to utilize this once-in-a-generation opportunity to revamp the children's rights agenda as the most impactful way to ensure the sustainability of all other commitments and goals. The first draft indicates that there is a lot to do for and with children to achieve that goal. Children are not there. We count on a strengthened effort from UNICEF to ensure a future for, by, and with children.

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Finally, we are ready to partner in the implementation of the soon to be adopted Country Program Document for Brazil. While the plan includes some key essential areas, we think the focus on a key group of children in Brazil (and around the world) is lacking focus and attention, leaving one of the most vulnerable groups of children behind.



The most recent data from a 2022 survey carried out by SOS Children's Villages in Brazil points to some worrying facts in the scenario of the right to family and community life in our country. For the sake of time, I will share just three illustrative results:

1. There has been a significant increase in the number of children and adolescents in alternative care in Brazil, mainly due to the worsening socio-economic situation of families.
2. Only around 36% of alternative care services take in children and adolescents of all ages and genders (pregnant women, adolescents with children and sibling groups). The remaining 64% only accept certain profiles.
3. Almost half of the children in alternative care are left in temporary arrangement longer than the 18 months allowed by the national legislation, many of them longer than 5 years.

There is a clear need to work for a strengthened, well-resourced, non-discriminatory alternative care system for all the children in Brazil. And for a stronger focus on the most vulnerable families to stay together and supported.

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We look forward to continuing our collaboration with UNICEF, Member States and civil society partners to deliver for all children. Count on us.

Thank you.