



UNICEF Executive Board – National Statement

Item 6: Update on UNICEF Humanitarian Action

Executive Board of UNICEF

First Regular Session

Ms. Sheona McKenna, Counsellor, Australian Mission to the United Nations

7 February 2024

As delivered

Thank you Chair.

We meet at a critical time as the scale and complexity of humanitarian crises continues to grow, and children are significantly impacted.

Australia is gravely concerned by the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza and in particular, the dire consequences of the conflict for children. We are proud to support UNICEF's efforts in the region and thank it for its well-structured and efficient response, particularly in providing critical water, sanitation, and hygiene services.



In Australia's region, the Pacific is the most disaster-prone in the world. Climate change remains the single greatest threat to livelihoods and the wellbeing of people in the Pacific.

Australia is pleased UNICEF's efforts on preparedness and anticipatory action continue to grow, including its participation in the Anticipatory Action Framework for Tropical Cyclones in Fiji, supported by Australia, UN OCHA and the Central Emergency Response Fund.

We look forward to the revamped Emergency Preparedness Platform launching later this year, which will lead to greater efficiencies and accessibility.

As UNICEF continues to work on data and performance monitoring projects, we hope to see pilots set up in the Indo-Pacific region to address key data gaps.

Australia's international development policy, launched last year, outlined our commitment to locally led efforts to drive change by supporting local



leadership, solutions, and accountability. This is a priority that Australia and UNICEF share.

We look forward to UNICEF resourcing and implementing the recommendations laid out in the Humanitarian Review. We also look forward to implementation of the recommendations in the localisation technical note on coordination, principled partnerships, and flexible funding for local actors.

Finally, Australia would be keen for UNICEF to share the results of their country-level monitoring of accountability to affected populations, which is vital to effective humanitarian action.

I thank you.