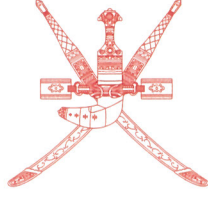


سلطنة عمان

Sultanate of Oman



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**Statement of the Sultanate of Oman
First Regular Session
UNICEF Executive Board**

Delivered by

**Dr. Mohamed Al-Hassan
Ambassador/ Permanent Representative**

**New York,
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Permanent Mission of the Sultanate of Oman to the United Nations

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At the outset, I would like to congratulate Her Excellency Audra Plepyte of Lithuania on assuming the presidency of the UNICEF Executive Board. I would like to wish her and the other Members of the Bureau every success in discharging their mandate.

We, in the Sultanate of Oman have a special interest in the work of UNICEF and the Executive Board of UNICEF, as my country is one of the strong advocates of the mission of UNICEF. Our experience and relationship with UNICEF is exemplary, and we are proud of this. We also look forward to further developing this partnership in other areas of mutual interest.

My statement today will focus to agenda item (7) relating to UNICEF's response to COVID-19. Allow me here to start by thanking the Director-General of the World Health Organization (His Excellency Dr. Tedros Adhanom) for his statement, and to thank Manuel Fontaine, Sanjay Wijesekera, Michael Ryan, and others for their invaluable contributions. In this context, I would like to point out the following:

- The response to Covid-19 is of universal interest; therefore, such a response and its extent, is in essence, a test to the spirit of cooperation and cohesiveness of the international community.**
- My country affirmed, when discussing the issue of COVID-19 at the UN General Assembly, the need to treat vaccines as a universal right and saving precious lives, around the world, should remain a top priority.**
- We have called for the need to give special consideration for conflict-ridden areas, such as Yemen and the Horn of Africa in the global response to COVID-19.**

I would also like to attract your attention to the importance of taking into account the economic and financial conditions that have affected many countries around the world due to Covid-19, and the obligations of those countries, towards the work of UNICEF.

Allow me to conclude by expressing our satisfaction of the work done by UNICEF and the excellent cooperation between Oman and UNICEF. We hope that this partnership would be strengthened in all areas of common interest.

I would also like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to the Executive Director of UNICEF, (Ms. Henrietta Fore) and the staff at UNICEF, including the Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, for all their tireless efforts relating to the needs of countries in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Thank you,

-End-