

**Annual Session of the UNICEF Executive Board
1 - 4 June 2021**

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**Intervention by the Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees to
Item 3: Annual Report for 2020 of the Executive Director of UNICEF**

Mr President, ED Fore, distinguished delegates, National Committee colleagues,

As the Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees, I am humbled to speak on behalf of this group of thirty-three organizations, who all are firmly committed to UNICEF's mandate and mission. National Committees are not only the largest contributors of UNICEF's unrestricted funds, but we are also the face and voice of UNICEF in many High-Income countries, representing millions of supporters.

Today, I would like to focus on three points related to ED Fore's excellent report.

2020 invited us all to think about universality in practice. The same way covid is universal, thankfully, so are child rights. And UNICEF is present in over 190 countries! National Committees play a crucial role in advocating for every child. Advocacy is one of the most powerful tools in our fight against inequality, discrimination and injustice anywhere.

This leads me to my second point.

National Committees have seen solid evidence that the more visible our advocacy results are, the more our supporters will be encouraged to join our cause, and the more resources we will be able to leverage for every child.

It is indeed a virtuous cycle, like one of my predecessors said in a past statement. The transformative power of advocacy is also the greatest inspiration to our supporters.

Like in previous years, in 2020, National Committees spared no efforts to go above and beyond for every child. We innovated, transformed the way we worked, and coordinated major efforts

with the support of our governments, businesses and individuals. In spite of the pandemic, and even with fierce competition for funds, last year was a record breaking year for National Committees and for the private sector.

National Committees understand the magnitude of the challenges ahead. Even in the richest nations, education and mental health have been severely impacted by the pandemic and will require concerted efforts to improve going forward. National Committees have an important role to play in this and many other fronts.

This leads me to my final point.

We join UNICEF in celebrating the achievements reached for every child, and we will work even harder until every target is met. Together, we can outsmart any challenges that come our way.

ED Fore's Report reminds us of UNICEF's true partnership with National Committees, which is built on our shared commitment to a unique and crucial mandate: To uphold all rights of all children everywhere based on the principles, values and commitments on the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

Thank you, ED Fore, for always valuing the real and potential contribution of National Committees! We continue to stand by your side to enhance and empower UNICEF's mission to build a world fit for every child.

Thank you,

Suzanne Laszlo

Chair of the Standing Group of National Committees