

**UNICEF Executive Board
Annual Session 2021
Item 14 / Address by Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff
Association**

Joint Statement delivered by Germany

Check against delivery

- I deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, the EU as a donor, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and my own country Germany.
- First, we would like to thank UNICEF staff for their dedicated and relentless efforts in supporting children, adolescents and their families all over the world, in development and crisis contexts and often under very challenging circumstances.
- The COVID-19-pandemic has directly affected UNICEF staff and their families. UNICEF staff in the field often worked under the risk of contracting the virus. Therefore, we mourn those UNICEF colleagues who lost their lives due to COVID and due to non-COVID-related causes. And to those who fell ill we wish a quick and full recovery.
- But COVID-19 has also put additional burden on UNICEF staff with regard to an increased workload, to work-life balance and to mental well-being. We commend all UNICEF staff for coping with the stresses from working at home and during lock-down and at the same time striving to deliver results for children and their families.

- Beyond continuing to strive for immediate results during the pandemic, UNICEF staff have, in our impression, shared the wake-up call that COVID-19 has been to many around the world. For it is UNICEF staff, in the field, in regional office and at headquarters, who must be credited with having helped to produce a Draft Strategic Plan that recognizes humanity's existential challenges and the need to address them effectively and jointly through accelerated catalytic action. Going forward, UNICEF staff's contribution to this endeavour will continue to be crucial.
- We would also like to congratulate the UNICEF Global Staff Association leadership team for their important work over the past year, particularly in representing all UNICEF staff actively, in communicating staff needs to management, in ensuring that work environment for all staff is conducive and in advocating for flexible working possibilities and organisational change in response to COVID-19. We would also encourage UNICEF to retain the good working practices identified during the pandemic to promote flexible working and respond to staff needs going forward.
- With the current initiatives on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, on the improvement of UNICEF's working culture and on the fight against discrimination and racism, we see UNICEF heading in the right direction. We value UNICEF staff's active involvement in driving these processes and we value the dialogue with staff, including through the annual Staff Association statement.

- We as member states stand ready to continue supporting you and the Global Staff Association.
- Thank you.