

**Statement by H.E. Ms. Rabab Fatima, Ambassador and Permanent  
Representative of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the  
United Nations at the 2022 First Regular Session of the  
UNICEF Executive Board  
10 am - 01 pm, 08 February 2022  
Time: 03 Minutes; Word count: 389**

I thank you, Mr. President, for giving me the floor. I warmly congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election.

Madame Executive Director – I join others in warmly congratulating you on your appointment. UNICEF is very special to Bangladesh; and we look forward to continuing that special relations under your leadership. You will have our full support.

**Madam Executive Director**, I thank you for your comprehensive overview on UNICEF's priorities for children across the world amidst the ongoing global challenges.

I have a few reflections and some specific questions:

**First**, we commend UNICEF's vital role in scaling up distribution of COVID vaccines through COVAX, especially its efforts to ensure vaccines equality in low-coverage African countries. However, we wish to reiterate that this new imperative should not impact UNICEF's regular services in any manner.

UNICEF's signature programmes for children, especially the routine immunization must continue with the same scale and urgency.

We would like to know, how do you plan to mobilize resources for tackling the impacts of the pandemic on your regular services, while fulfilling your responsibilities with regard to distribution of COVID vaccines?

**Second**, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education is a generational catastrophe. The children in the countries of the global south are the hardest hit due to lack of access to online education and distance learning platforms.

Against this backdrop, the Secretary General's report 'Our Common Agenda' calls for a global "Digital Compact" with an ambitious target to "connect all people to the internet, including all schools".

How does UNICEF plan to scale up its successful initiatives such as GIGA to support this vision?

**Third**, as the Chair of Peacebuilding Commission for 2022, Bangladesh attaches high priority to the enhanced engagements of the PBC with Funds and Programs. We are aware of UNICEF's important work for children in conflict affected contexts, which makes it one of the largest recipients of the Peacebuilding Fund.

How can the PBC collaborate more with the UNICEF within its mandate to support UNICEF's work for children in the peacebuilding context?

**Finally**, how do you plan to ensure maximum synergies of UNICEF's Strategic Plan with national priorities to put children at the center of national response and recovery efforts from the pandemic.

I thank you, Mr. President. I wish you a very productive first session of the year.