

Executive Board of UNICEF
Agenda item 6 b) Establishment of an ASG position in UNICEF
First Regular Session 2022
9th February 2022, New York

Chair/ Madam Chair,

I deliver this statement on behalf of the following cross regional group of Member States: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kingdom of Netherlands, Lebanon, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mexico, Montenegro, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Yemen and my own country Norway.

Chair/ Madam Chair,

We wish to thank UNICEF for their presentation today, and for the documents presented to the Executive Board.

We remain concerned by the global disparity in vaccine delivery, and agree with UNICEF's assessment that the focus of coordination efforts must shift to delivery and country support.

Chair, Madam Chair,

We believe that the establishment of a Global Inter-Agency Coordination Structure is an important and necessary step in that direction. That the head of this structure shall be ranked at the Assistant Secretary General level facilitates buy-in from all necessary partners.

We are convinced that UNICEF is an appropriate host for the position, because of its unmatched expertise and experience across procurement, supply and implementation, and its position at country level. Nevertheless we are pleased to see the position also reporting to WHO, as well as regularly updating the recently appointed Gavi Alliance COVID-19 Vaccination Delivery

Support Steering Committee, as ensuring coordination across all partners and pillars of ACT-A is critical to broader success

Chair/ Madam chair,

We recognize the importance of avoiding an inflation in the number of permanent ASG positions that put pressure on the budget of UNICEF. We support the proposal to create this temporary position to lead coordination role in the fight against Covid-19, time-bound to two years duration, and funded from resources contributed specifically to address this unprecedented crisis and ensure a well-tailored solution.

Let me close by re-iterating our support for the establishment of the temporary position as Assistant Secretary General to lead the Global COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Inter-Agency Coordination Structure. We look forward to being updated at future Board meetings.