



New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Te Māngai o Aotearoa

UNICEF Executive Board

**New Zealand Statement delivered by
Permanent Representative, Craig Hawke**

9 February 2021

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY



Madam President, Executive Director.

We must acknowledge from the outset that this will be a difficult year. The COVID-19 health crisis continues and the associated economic and social impacts will have a long tail.

However, this year will also have opportunities, including to demonstrate innovation and improved cooperation to deliver for children.

The next Strategic Plan will provide an opportunity to build on UNICEF's strong reputation by focusing UNICEF's efforts on where they will most be needed.

New Zealand would like to emphasise three points:

- Firstly, delivery for the most vulnerable children. We are concerned that the COVID-19 measures have reduced connectivity, and may make it more difficult for UNICEF to reach the most vulnerable. We encourage UNICEF to provide information on how UNICEF will deliver for children in remote communities, children with disabilities, girls, and children in humanitarian situations.
- Secondly, delivery of UNICEF's normative function. While the COVID-19 response demands speed and urgency, we must ensure that a human rights based-approach to programming is maintained. New Zealand will be calling for continued, clear communication from UNICEF on how it applies this approach.
- Thirdly, effective and coordinated multilateral action. To respond to the scope of the COVID-19 crisis, it is vitally important that the UN System and development actors increase cooperation to ensure efficacy and reduce duplication of effort. New Zealand welcomes the initiatives you have outlined today in this regard.

Executive Director, New Zealand is heartened to hear these priorities reflected in your own remarks and we look forward to ongoing cooperation, including in our role as Vice-President of the Executive Board this year.

Thank you, Madam President.