

**Agenda Item 8**  
**Evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018-2021**

Madam Chair,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union as a donor.

We welcome the evaluation of the UNICEF Strategic Plan and the positive Management response. The findings of the evaluation are instrumental for the preparation of the new Strategic Plan. We appreciate that it factors in previous reviews and evaluations, including the recent Humanitarian Review.

It is reassuring that the Strategic Plan has been relevant and widely used as a framework and guidance, including at country office level, providing adequate flexibility. However, we fully endorse recommendation 1 on applying a whole-of-organization approach and including stronger reflection of the voices of children in the planning and operationalization processes. This clearly indicates key areas of work and related results. In this context, strong collaborative mechanisms between headquarters, regional offices and country offices are crucial. By the same token, strong cooperation with other UN agencies is essential, and we would appreciate regular updates in the Board about partnerships, including related Memoranda of Understanding.

We support the development of a longer-term, outcome-focused strategy for children, as per recommendation 2, as well as UNICEF's intention to make this the guiding principle in the development of its new Strategic Plan. Given the importance of multi-sectoral support to the manifold needs of vulnerable populations, we welcome recommendation 4 on enhancing an integrated approach. Strengthened reporting on outcome-level indicators is a good tool to help secure appropriate funding.

In order to strengthen the implementation of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus, we strongly support recommendation 5 on reflecting UNICEF's dual humanitarian-development mandate in a more coherent way and addressing related bottlenecks in programming and reporting. We welcome the suggested increased staff flexibility to work in both humanitarian and development settings, reducing the risk of programmatic silos. We also encourage UNICEF to strengthen staff capacity at country level to effectively support risk-informed programming in the humanitarian and development aspects of UNICEF's work, also in view of the continued challenging COVID-19 context. In line with UNICEF's dual mandate, we appreciate the Management's response that the new Strategic Plan will for the first time include a humanitarian lens in the analysis that will underpin the results framework.

We welcome the recommendation for developing a longer-term strategy aligned with the 2030 Agenda and allowing for flexibility to address emerging threats. This is important for an effective and comprehensive response for the protection of children.

With regards to advocacy and resource mobilization, we encourage UNICEF to engage in outreach together with other aid organizations and increase joint programme initiatives. Such a collaborative approach will also promote the implementation of recommendation 7, supporting the UN development system reform roll-out and pursuing a people-centred approach.

Thank you.