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**STATEMENT
of the representative of the Russian Federation Ms. Elena Melnik
at the Annual session of UNICEF Executive Board**

June 1, 2021 года

Mr. President,

M-me Executive Director,

First of all, I would like to congratulate everyone on the International Children's day! We are pleased that our virtual session starts at this particular day. We hope that as the epidemiological situation is stabilizing, our September session will be held in person.

We welcome UNICEF's achievements in 2020, as presented in the Annual report of the Executive Director. We particularly noted impressive results in the areas of providing safe births, fighting severe acute malnutrition, ensuring continuity of education, supporting children with disabilities, curing pneumonia and doing vaccinations. We would be interested to know the meaning of the term "child-friendly justice" mentioned under Goal area 3.

We took note with appreciation of UNICEF's work in support of family-friendly programmes in 46 countries, as well as of UNICEF's assistance to children who have no families. We believe that these areas are very important for UNICEF's work and part from the fact that they should be included in the future Strategic Plan.

With regards to UNICEF's active role in support of children as agents of change we would like to know if parents are included in those activities.

Mr. President,

We welcome UNICEF's role in global efforts to fight COVID-19, including by providing the continuity of education, psychological support and, of course, vaccination. UNICEF not only supplies vaccines, but helps countries in creating cold chain systems for storing, which was clearly demonstrated during UNICEF's virtual field visit to Mali last week.

Regarding COVID-19 vaccines we are delighted that the long-term agreement on supplying Sputnik-V vaccines has been signed between the Direct Investments Fund and UNICEF. We are sure that this initiative will make a serious contribution to global efforts to fight the pandemic.

Mr. President,

Russia stands for the preservation of strong roles of entities within the framework of UNDS reform. We agree that there should be mutual accountability between Resident-Coordinators (RCs) and agencies within revised Mutual Accountability Frameworks. We would like to know what UNICEF expects from the forthcoming Review of the RC System and we are going to take active part in this process, including, I repeat, with the aim to support the role of agencies as they possess deep and trusted expertise in operational activities.

Mr. President,

We will deliver a separate statement for the discussion on the draft UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Now we would only like to note that even though it is not a negotiated document, we hope that it will take into consideration "red lines" of Member-States and further enhance UNICEF's work to "utilize and strengthen the permanent child health and child welfare programmes of the countries receiving assistance" as follows from its mandate.

Thank you!