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Economic and Social Council

## UNICEF Executive Board

### Agenda Item 11

## Update on implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

11 June 2025, New York

Joint statement by Switzerland

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Mister/Madam President,

I deliver this statement on behalf of the following group of member states: Austria, Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, the Republic of Moldova, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the EU as a donor, and my own country, Switzerland.

We are pleased to see that the UN Development System (UNDS) reform is showing results. The UN, however, is operating in a context of growing demands and declining resources. This makes full implementation of UNDS reform indispensable to rebuild trust in the UN system and safeguard its global legitimacy. Ongoing reforms must continue with urgency and ambition. We welcome the Secretary-General's UN80 Initiative and see clear opportunities to consolidate the learning and gains of the UNDS reform. We must ensure that the UN80 Initiative builds on - not bypasses - the reforms already under way.

We would like to emphasize the following points:

1). In light of persistent funding constraints, we see great potential in the further consolidation and increased use of shared services, common back offices and common premises. These are not just essential for efficiency gains, but also for further coherence and credibility. Cost-reductions cannot be short-sighted and must lead to increased system-wide coherence and efficiency gains. Which actions is UNICEF taking to further consolidate and improve joint business operations with the wider UN system?

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Can UNICEF elaborate how they will keep member states informed of how current cost-reduction measures are impacting further co-location and consolidation?

2). Transparency and accountability are key to improving performance. We, therefore, note with concern that the SG has signaled that progress in implementing the Management and Accountability Framework (MAF) has stalled. How will UNICEF ensure improved implementation of the MAF?

3). The dual reporting model is not yet sufficiently implemented. Especially the number of Resident Coordinators (RCs) that are requested to provide input on performance appraisals of heads of agencies lags behind. Can UNICEF share what challenges you are facing in this area? We would like to see full participation in this model - what can the Board do to facilitate compliance?

4). The System-wide Evaluation on progress towards a new generation of UN Country Teams confirms that RCs estimate that 79% of entity-specific programming instruments are aligned with the Cooperation Framework. However, this alignment is very soft and does not translate into genuine derivation from the Cooperation Frameworks into Agency-specific plans. We reiterate the importance of ensuring derivation of country programmes from the Cooperation Frameworks. We request all agencies, including UNICEF, to submit a letter to the board from the respective RC confirming that the respective CPD is derived from the respective Cooperation Framework.

5). Last year the Board requested agencies to take further steps to ensure effective information sharing with RCs. We are pleased to note improvements in this regard. However, more work needs to be done to keep RCs better informed on agencies' outreach to funding partners. How does UNICEF plan to improve this?

6). And finally: preliminary findings of the System-Wide Evaluation indicate that, while more and more country configuration exercises are undertaken, they have not created a more tailored, needs-based country presence. This is concerning. We call on all agencies, including UNICEF, to connect ongoing business model reviews and reorganization exercises to the goal of needs-based country presence, rather than treat these processes in isolation.

Mister president, we acknowledge that there has been a lot of progress. However, in light of the current challenges, and in the context of UN80, we call on all UN entities to go the extra mile – together - to increase collaboration, joint programming, and integrated approaches in an ultimate effort, in this last stretch, to achieve the SDGs.