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**STATEMENT OF MARTIN S. RENDON  
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**BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND  
RELATED PROGRAMS  
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**APRIL 20, 2018**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of nearly one million American supporters of UNICEF USA, I appreciate this opportunity to submit testimony to you regarding the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide \$132.5 million as the U.S. Government's voluntary contribution to UNICEF under the Department of State for fiscal year 2019. This maintains the contribution of \$132.5 million to UNICEF provided by the U.S. Congress in the fiscal year 2018 Omnibus Appropriations Act.

I commend the bipartisan leadership this Subcommittee has taken to champion programs that help children around the world.

Since its creation in 1946, UNICEF has helped to save more children's lives than any humanitarian organization in the world. UNICEF staff work on the ground in developing and transitional countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. UNICEF supports prenatal care, child health and nutrition, clean water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and protecting children from violence, exploitation, and HIV/AIDS.

Thanks to strong support from the U.S. Congress for UNICEF and for child survival, the number of children dying before age five has dropped by 62 percent since 1990. We saw progress even in poorer countries: 24 out of 81 low- and lower-middle income countries cut under-five mortality rates by two thirds or more from 1990 to 2015.

All of UNICEF's funding comes from voluntary contributions from governments, businesses, foundations, and individuals. In fact, 29 percent of UNICEF's total funding comes from non-governmental sources. The U.S. Government's support of UNICEF leverages private sector funding from corporations, foundations, and other donor governments. This structure is unique among UN agencies.

UNICEF works with the private sector to achieve change by harnessing their business power. For example, UNICEF is one of the largest buyers of supplies for children – in 2016 procuring over \$3.5 billion in supplies and services, including \$500 million from U.S.-based suppliers all across the country.

As an organization completely funded by voluntary contributions, UNICEF makes sure that its operations are efficient and focused on results where they matter – for vulnerable children around the world. UNICEF program support costs, as a percentage of total organization

expenditure, was 11 percent in 2016. UNICEF is give high marks in terms of transparency and UNICEF internal audits are accessible on its website for review.

Through innovative procurement, market strategies and partnerships, UNICEF has driven down supply prices, resulting in \$1.5 billion in savings over the last five years. In 2016 alone, reduced prices resulted in savings of \$520 million. UNICEF is committed to achieving value for the dollar, and promoting sustainability and security in supply chains to save children.

We believe that it is possible to end preventable child deaths globally in a generation, with continued investment in cost-effective, coordinated interventions for children and mothers. UNICEF's efforts around the world implement the compassion of the American people by helping children and families. That is why UNICEF enjoys incredible backing from Americans for its mission of child survival and development, from children participating in "Trick or Treat for UNICEF" and "Kid Power," to major corporations donating money and products. That private support is critical to UNICEF's success in saving children's lives from measles and cholera, providing access to clean water, helping children stay in school, and thwarting child traffickers trying to exploit vulnerable children.

UNICEF USA is also proud of its partnerships with the private sector to save children's lives. Among many examples:

- The Prudential Company invested \$1.5 million in 2016 to support UNICEF's efforts to integrate resiliency and disaster risk reduction into UNICEF programming that will help UNICEF and its partners analyze the risks to children posed by disasters, epidemics, and other shocks.
- In September 2016, Disney committed another \$1 million to support the Star Wars: Force for Change and UNICEF Kid Power partnership. Since 2014, more than \$7.5 million has been raised in the name of Star Wars: Force for Change for UNICEF's programs to put children first around the world, including Innovation and UNICEF Kid Power.
- Since the Pampers-UNICEF "1 pack=1 vaccine" campaign began in 2006, more than half a million newborn babies have been saved from maternal and neonatal tetanus, and a vaccine has reached a mother and her baby every second. Pampers donates 1 vaccine against tetanus for every pack of Pampers sold, raising more than \$53 million for UNICEF.
- In 2016, Google made a \$1 million donation to UNICEF to fight the spread of the Zika virus. Google engineers volunteered with UNICEF to build a platform that could map and anticipate outbreaks of the virus, as well as to develop technology that is applicable both to Zika now and other health emergencies in the future. With the support of Google, UNICEF reached millions of people with critical information on staying safe.
- Kiwanis International, with its more than 600,000 members, partners with UNICEF for *The Eliminate Project*, the current Kiwanis global campaign to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT). This project will protect more than 200 million women and their newborn children from the deadly disease. UNICEF also continues its work with Kiwanis to eliminate iodine deficiency. This partnership has protected 84 million newborns from brain damage caused by iodine deficiency.

The U.S. Government's longstanding and generous support of UNICEF allows it to leverage private sector funding and work with U.S. Government programs to make a real difference in saving children's lives.

UNICEF has been a world leader in immunizations, and is the world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries. In 2016, UNICEF procured 2.5 billion doses of vaccines, protecting over 45 percent of the world's children under age 5 from deadly diseases. UNICEF is a major partner with the United States in fighting vaccine-preventable diseases, including polio and measles. UNICEF is responsible for procuring vaccines for Gavi, and also buys all vaccines and related items for global campaigns not covered by Gavi. UNICEF's market power helped it cut in half the cost of the pentavalent vaccine that will protect tens of millions of children from potentially deadly infections caused by diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B and Haemophilus influenzae type b. In addition, UNICEF works in-country to ensure that vaccines reach even the poorest children and communities.

Malaria remains a major threat to children. UNICEF is a founding member of the Roll Back Malaria Partnership to support malaria treatment and research, and expand prevention measures such as long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets. UNICEF is one of the largest buyers of mosquito nets in the world, procuring 41 million bed nets in 2016 to protect children and families.

Malnutrition contributes to nearly half of all child deaths and causes stunting that affects a child's physical and cognitive development. We know that therapeutic foods can help to bring a child back from the verge of starvation. In 2016, UNICEF and its partners treated 3.4 million children for severe acute malnutrition in 71 countries.

Between 2014 and 2016, UNICEF provided 111 million people with safe water and 51 million people with sanitation. This included over 43,600 schools and nearly 3,600 health facilities.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative, a partnership led by UNICEF, Rotary International, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and others, has helped reduce polio cases by more than 99 percent since 1988. UNICEF and its partners have immunized more than 2.5 billion children by working with over 200 countries and 20 million volunteers. This is incredible progress and the end of polio is within reach – but we can't stop now. UNICEF and its partners continue to support massive immunization campaigns to eradicate once and for all this terrible disease. In addition, UNICEF engages with manufacturers to maximize availability and manufacturing capacity, and keeps polio vaccine prices as low as possible.

Education is essential for children's futures, especially for girls: education helps protect girls from exploitation, child marriage, and abuse. UNICEF plays a critical role in global efforts to address the 61 million primary school age children, including 32 million girls, who are not in school. UNICEF focuses on girls because of the importance of education to a girl's survival and development. In 2016, UNICEF provided learning materials for 15.7 million children and teaching materials for more than 331,000 classrooms.

Birth registration is critically important to ensure that children have access to social services and education. In 2016, more than 12 million births were registered in 54 countries with support from UNICEF. In addition, UNICEF supported advocacy efforts aimed at strengthening national plans or strategies to end child marriage in 30 countries.

UNICEF's established presence in developing countries supported by the U.S. Government contribution makes it an important partner for the U.S. Government in responses to major crises. In 2016, UNICEF and its partners assisted in 344 humanitarian situations across 108 countries and reached millions of vulnerable children and their caregivers. UNICEF helped nearly 29 million people in crises to access safe drinking water; ensured 24 million children were vaccinated for measles; helped 11.7 million children access education in emergencies; treated 2.4 million young children for severe acute malnutrition; and provided important psychosocial support to 3 million children. Through the support of the U.S. Government contribution to UNICEF, UNICEF is on the front line during health emergencies like Ebola, Zika, and measles, while working in nations in crisis like Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Somalia, and Nigeria.

UNICEF's ability to partner with the U.S. Government, and with important nonprofit partners like Kiwanis, Rotary, the American Red Cross, and Gavi, depends on a strong U.S. contribution to UNICEF, as well as maintaining U.S. support for its bilateral child health programs. In this regard, UNICEF USA supports the funding requested by our partners for Iodine Deficiency Disorders, Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus, Polio Eradication, and Gavi. Because of the importance of U.S. child survival and health programs, our organization also asks the U.S. Congress to sustain funding for the Maternal and Child Health Account and for nutrition in fiscal year 2019.

Annual government contributions to UNICEF's regular resources budget constitute the single most important funding source for UNICEF worldwide. The U.S. Government's voluntary contribution to UNICEF's regular resources provides the foundation for UNICEF's work to save children's lives and improve their futures. Resources provided by this Subcommittee are critical to UNICEF's ability to help the United States in international humanitarian crises, conflict areas, and emerging threats to the well-being of children.

Mr. Chairman, this Subcommittee has long been a champion for the well-being of the world's children, ensuring that children are a priority of U.S. foreign assistance funding. American advocates of UNICEF's work for the world's children salute the bipartisan support this Subcommittee has provided for child survival and for UNICEF. We thank you for working to put children first.

We believe that UNICEF is an indispensable partner of the United States on initiatives to save lives and protect vulnerable children around the world.

We cannot rest on our past successes. Unfortunately, 5.6 million children under five still die every year, mostly from preventable causes; half of those deaths occur in the first week after birth. We believe that number should be zero.

A strong commitment from the United States will strengthen UNICEF's capacity to meet the needs of vulnerable children, in partnership with Americans who care about children everywhere.

I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide \$132.5 million for UNICEF's regular resources for fiscal year 2019.