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**BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND
RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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Madam Chairwoman, Ranking Member Rogers, and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of more than 500,000 American supporters of UNICEF USA, I appreciate this opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee regarding the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). **I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide, under the Department of State's International Organizations and Program account, \$134 million as the U.S. Government's fiscal year 2021 voluntary contribution to UNICEF's core resources.** This maintains the contribution of \$134 million to UNICEF core resources at the same level as provided in the fiscal year 2020 omnibus agreement.

UNICEF, in the past two years, has been involved in an unprecedented number of emergency humanitarian situations facing children. From combating Ebola and other infectious disease outbreaks to responding to the needs of children in conflict and fragile state situations, UNICEF is on the ground fighting for children.

Without the fiscal year 2021 U.S. contribution to UNICEF of \$134 million, UNICEF could not provide the emergency and sustainable assistance to address critical global health and development programs.

Without this core support to UNICEF, programs such as polio eradication, basic education, immunizations, anti-malarial bed nets, pediatric HIV/AIDS interventions, and protecting children from violence and abuse would be put at risk.

Since its creation in 1946, UNICEF has helped to save more children's lives than any humanitarian organization in the world. I commend this Subcommittee's for its bipartisan leadership to champion programs that help children around the world. You are making a difference.

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 nearly 60 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.

UNICEF is entirely funded by voluntary contributions from governments, private sector, and individuals. Annual government contributions to UNICEF's core resources budget constitute the single most important funding source for UNICEF worldwide. The U.S. Government's

voluntary contribution to UNICEF's core 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.

UNICEF'S HUMANITARIAN IMPACT FOR CHILDREN

Sadly, crises and conflicts around the world disproportionately impact vulnerable children and threaten to roll back important progress for children. In conflict and disaster, children suffer first and suffer most. Today, one in four of the world's children lives in a conflict or disaster zone. All of these children face an uncertain future.

The number of countries experiencing conflict is at its highest point since 1989. Nearly nine years of war in the Syrian Arab Republic have left nearly five million children in need and more than 2.5 million children living as refugees outside of the country; more than four years of conflict in Yemen have created the world's worst humanitarian crisis; about 1.2 million children in the Central African Republic desperately need help after six years of war. Across West and Central Africa, violence and insecurity are already robbing nearly 2 million children — an entire generation — of their right to education. Around the world, more than 30 million children have been displaced by conflict, many of them enslaved, trafficked, abused and exploited.

UNICEF is on the ground before, during, and after emergencies, working to reach children and families with lifesaving aid and long-term assistance. Because of its presence, reach, and expertise, UNICEF is a global leader in emergency response. U.S. Government support for UNICEF's core resources ensures that UNICEF has infrastructure in place to help children at the onset of crisis, and UNICEF is a global partner in helping the U.S. Government respond to humanitarian crises around the world.

UNICEF: PRIVATE FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Almost a third 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 is committed to achieving value for every dollar. UNICEF is one of the largest buyers of supplies for children: in 2018, UNICEF procured \$3.5 billion worth of supplies and services, including \$485.5 million from U.S.-based suppliers. Through innovative procurement, market strategies and partnerships, UNICEF uses its market power to drive down supply prices, resulting in nearly \$2 billion in savings over the last five years. In 2018, UNICEF used its market power to save nearly \$351.2 million on costs for vaccines and strategic supplies.

UNICEF's efforts around the world implement the compassion of the American people for 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 vaccine-preventable diseases, providing access to clean water, helping children stay in school, and thwarting child traffickers trying to exploit vulnerable children. UNICEF USA is proud of its partnerships with corporations and nonprofits to save children’s lives. Among many examples:

- Kiwanis International, with its nearly 550,000 members, partners with UNICEF to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT). Between 1999 and 2018, the Global MNT Elimination Initiative has vaccinated more than 154 million women against this deadly disease. Last year, both Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo was certified as the 46th and 47th countries to eliminate MNT. There are just 12 countries still facing the threat of MNT. UNICEF also continues its work with Kiwanis to eliminate iodine deficiency disorders. Thanks in part to this partnership, the number of households with access to iodized salt has jumped dramatically from less than 20 percent in the early 1990s to 86 percent in 2018.
- Rotary International, in partnership with UNICEF and others, has helped nearly eliminate polio worldwide, reducing polio cases by more than 99.9% since 1988. UNICEF and its partners have immunized more than 2.5 billion children by working with more than 200 countries and 20 million volunteers.
- For over 30 years, Johnson & Johnson and UNICEF have worked together to improve the lives of children and their families globally, with a mutual commitment to paving the way to a healthier future for mothers, newborns, children and their community. In November 2018, J&J committed an additional \$10 million to help strengthen health systems through the training and empowerment of frontline health workers, and the development and implementation of innovative tools to help bridge health access and health equity gaps.
- LDS Charities, the humanitarian arm of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has partnered with UNICEF since 2013. In 2018, LDS Charities provided seed funding for Learning for Life, a multi-country program designed to meet the Early Childhood Development (ECD) and education needs of children in South Sudan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. Learning for Life provides children with nutrition, stimulation and protection for optimal brain development.
- Microsoft and UNICEF launched a new partnership to tackle the education crisis impacting 75 million children and young people affected by conflict and natural disasters, and to provide them with protection services. Under this partnership, UNICEF in collaboration with Microsoft and the University of Cambridge are developing a ‘learning passport’ – a digital platform that will facilitate learning opportunities for children and young people within and across borders, in countries hosting refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons.
- As a core partner of the Measles and Rubella Initiative with American Red Cross and CDC, UNICEF has helped cut measles deaths by 73% between 2000 and 2018. Unfortunately, UNICEF recently warned that cases of measles rose by 200% between 2018 and 2019, with significant outbreaks in Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Liberia, Ukraine, and Somalia.

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 fiscal year 2021 funding requested by our partners for Iodine Deficiency Disorders (\$2.5 million), Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus (\$2.0 million), Polio Eradication (\$59 million), and Gavi (\$290.0 million). Because of the importance of U.S. child survival and health programs, our organization also asks the U.S. Congress to provide at least \$900 million under the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) account, and \$200 million for nutrition in fiscal year 2021.

U.S. SUPPORT FOR UNICEF IS HELPING TO IMPROVE AND SAVE LIVES

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 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:

- **Education**, including early childhood development, is essential for children's futures, especially for girls: education helps protect girls from exploitation, child marriage, and abuse. There are still 130 million girls between the age of 6 and 17 out of school globally, and 15 million girls of primary-school age will never enter a classroom. Girls living in conflict contexts are more than twice as likely to be out of primary school as their counterparts in countries not affected by conflict. UNICEF plays a critical role in global efforts to ensure children have access to educations, including in humanitarian crises.
- **UNICEF has been a world leader in immunizations** and is the world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries. UNICEF purchased 2.36 billion vaccines for children 99 countries, reaching nearly half the world's children under age 5. UNICEF is a major partner with the United States in fighting vaccine-preventable diseases, including polio and measles. UNICEF procures vaccines for Gavi and 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 influenza 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 28 million bed nets in 2018 to protect children and families in 17 countries, including nearly 1.5 million people in humanitarian situations. UNICEF also provided 10.5 million malaria rapid diagnostic tests to 22 countries.
- **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. Thanks to UNICEF support, more children

have been treated for severe acute malnutrition (SAM) than ever before: more than 4 million in 2018.

- **UNICEF engaged in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)** programming 2018 in 105 countries, including support for humanitarian responses in 72 countries.
- **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.
- **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. With support from the U.S. Government, UNICEF is on the front lines helping children in crisis, in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, the Lake Chad Basin, South Sudan, Venezuela, the Central Sahel, and elsewhere. In 2018, UNICEF assisted in 285 humanitarian situations across 90 countries, reaching millions of vulnerable children and their families.
- **UNICEF's response to the Ebola** outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has included reaching nearly 35 million people with information, 2,837 schools with handwashing facilities, and 9,685 separated and orphaned children with assistance.

CONCLUSION

Madam Chairwoman, 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 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. 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.

A strong commitment of at least a \$134 million fiscal year 2021 U.S. contribution to UNICEF's core resources will help us reach that dream.

We thank you for your consideration and for working to put children first.