



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BULGARIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**UNICEF Executive Board
Second Regular Session, New York, 12 – 15 September 2017 (CR 2 CB)**

**H.E. Mr. Georgi Panayotov, Ambassador,
Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the UN**

General Statements

New York, Tuesday, 12 September 2017

Mr. President,

I would like to thank the Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake for his visionary leadership focused on delivering results for children everywhere. I extend special thanks also to each and every UNICEF staff member for their dedication to the protection and well-being of every child in different parts of the world quite too often in the most difficult and dangerous contexts.

As one of the most influential and well-established agencies in the UN System UNICEF has been leading by example in all global humanitarian and development efforts over the years contributing immensely to improving children's lives in all parts of the world. The new Strategic Plan for 2018 - 2021 builds on this ambition for a more efficient and cost-effective organization that will be able to address the horrific challenges facing the world today which affect children most adversely.

The Bulgarian Government welcomes the new Strategic Plan and its guiding principles grounded in child rights and gender equality, as well as the progressive initiative for working together in line with 2030 Agenda and the 2016 QCPR as exemplified in the Common Chapter which identifies common indicators for shared areas of collaborative advantage among the sister UN agencies.

Bulgaria commends UNICEF for the open and transparent process of preparing the Strategic Plan and the extensive consultations held with a wide range of stakeholders in the spirit of the shared values of cooperation and dedication to a common cause which helped craft a clear, logical and comprehensive framework for UNICEF to accomplish our joint objectives for children in the next four years.

Bulgaria strongly supports the enhanced focus on the rights of children with disabilities as a cross-cutting priority in the Strategic Plan which underpins the operationalization of the concept of leaving no one behind stipulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As President of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons of Disabilities Bulgaria is making every effort to ensure that the principles of the Convention guide the implementation of all other global agreements reaffirming inclusion and participation as indispensable for achieving sustainable development for all where children come first. Being a strong advocate for children as co-chair of the Group of Friends of Children and the SDGs Bulgaria actively promotes children's rights in all intergovernmental processes.

I would like to reaffirm our strong support for UNICEF's work and to welcome the new initiative "Our UNICEF" as presented by Mr. Lake which will help the organization build a broader and more strategic base of support through enhanced partnerships with the UN System, Governments, civil society and the private sector. Bulgaria has significantly increased its contributions to UNICEF and currently the largest part of Bulgaria's humanitarian and development assistance is realized through UNICEF. Bulgaria looks forward to a continued close partnership with UNICEF both at national and global level.

Bulgaria is strongly committed to promoting child rights and child participation and has been recognized as a leader in the region in child care in recent years. UNICEF also plays a vital role in those efforts. The positive example of Bulgaria has already been successfully shared with countries in our region and beyond which strengthens UNICEF's horizontal cooperation as well. Building on those achievements Bulgaria has the ambition to become a Regional Hub for UNICEF - a priority that underpins the new Country Programme Document for Bulgaria to be considered by the UNICEF Executive Board during the current session and I would encourage Board Members to support the CPD for Bulgaria.

Thank you, Mr. President.