



**STATEMENT BY MS. RIVA NAYYAR, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN
AND CHILD WELFARE, ON BRIEFING ON INDIAN OCEAN
EARTHQUAKE/Tsunami AT FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE
BOARD OF UNICEF 2005 ON NEW YORK, 17 JANUARY 2005**

Mr. President,

We congratulate you on taking over as President of the Bureau. We hope to work constructively on issues of importance to UNICEF. We also thank the Executive Director for the report on tsunami.

The ferocity with which the unprecedented Tsunami disaster violently shook several countries in a matter of hours from Asia to Africa on the fateful day of December 26 is beyond words. The tidal waves swept through taking with them over a hundred and fifty thousand lives and damaged or destroyed billions of dollars worth of property and infrastructure. Thousands of people have nothing left, of not only their kith and kin but also of their lives and livelihoods. The global community not only appreciated the gravity of the situation on the ground in the affected countries, but lost no time in reaching the affected quickly, with support, help and relief material. The pledges for assistance and support have been unprecedented. No doubt, UNICEF leadership has contributed in an extraordinary measure to the relief and rehabilitation efforts in the area.

I would like to say a special word about the thousands of children who have lost most, if not all, members of their families. We need to provide these young ones solace and comfort. The administrations of the State Governments and Union Territories involved have been sensitized about the needs of orphaned children and requested to remain vigilant about the safety of such children as well as women who have been widowed by the Tsunami. They have also been asked to prepare a list of such children and widows and monitor their welfare and ensure their well being.

India deeply appreciates the kind and generous offers of help from several countries. While mounting a massive relief and rehabilitation effort in our own country, we have also extended assistance to some of our neighbours.

We are touched by the messages of condolence and sympathy and wish to express our gratitude for all the goodwill and friendship shown to us.

Thank you, Mr. President

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)