



STATEMENT BY MRS. REVA NAYYAR, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT, MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, ON AGENDA ITEM 5: BIENNIAL SUPPORT BUDGET FOR 2006-2007 AT THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION 2006 OF THE UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD 16-20 & 23 JANUARY 2006 ON JANUARY 16, 2006

Mr. President,

We thank the Executive Director for the comprehensive and succinct report presented under this agenda item. We appreciate the efforts taken to make this document readily understandable, including through the presentation made this afternoon.

Mr. President,

We note that the budget proposals include funding for some new initiatives. The document provides details of the proposal to strengthen the current ombudsperson system. We have noted from the report of the ACABQ that the Committee welcomes this initiative as it is intended to provide an effective and harmonized mechanism for staff in all locations.

The other initiative, the establishment of a separation fund for staff funded from all resources to cover separation and termination liabilities through a replenishment method over a vast period, has also been recommended by the ACABQ.

Mr. President,

We note from the report of the ACABQ that the support budget as compared to the use of total resources has been decreasing. While this would be a development in the right direction, we note from the report of the ACABQ that the full costs of delivering programmes remains a concern of the Advisory Committee. We reiterate the Committee's request that renewed attention be given to clearly defining and fully disclosing these types of costs, in addition to continued efforts to minimize costs of delivery.

We also reiterate the recommendation of the Committee that in view of continued increase in extra budgetary resources and emphasis on obtaining funding from private sector, attention must be given to ensuring that these resources are subject to a greater measure of scrutiny and control.

Mr. President,

We have a few clarifications to seek on the proposals contained in the report. The report makes a proposal to establish a small unit in the office of the Executive Director to coordinate reform activities. We would request for some details of this office and its fundings, including the expenditure that is likely to be incurred on this office. The financial aspect of this proposal is particularly relevant as one of the reasons for the reforms is to reduce operational costs.

The report speaks of the "strategic shifts" that are proposed to be taken under the leadership of the Division of Policy and Planning during 2006-07 (paragraph 27 of the report). We would like to have some details of the "strategic shifts" that are envisaged for 2006-07.

We notice that expenditures on account of safety and security have been clubbed with expenditures for emergency planning that involves support to the Inter-agency Standing Committee for Humanitarian Affairs/Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva. The reason for clubbing these two kinds of expenditures is not immediately apparent to us and we request the Executive Director for some clarification.

We also note that UNICEF is proposing to regularize the establishment of positions in headquarters to manage stress counseling and HIV/AIDS in the workplace, which are currently funded partially from other resources. We would request the Executive Director to let us know the practice followed by other agencies in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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