

**2nd Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board, 15-19 September 2003
Statement by O'Neil Francis on Agenda Item 4 – Report on implementation
of the modified system for allocation of regular resources for programmes
(E/ICEF/2003/P/L.2)**

I am pleased to speak on behalf of the delegations of Guyana and Haiti and on behalf of my own country Jamaica.

We wish to join previous speakers in expressing our condolences to the families of United Nations employees who recently lost their lives in Iraq and also to our Swedish colleagues on the tragic loss of their Foreign Minister.

We also wish to thank the Executive Director for her report which has outlined in detail the implementation experiences with the modified system for the allocation of regular resources.

We commend UNICEF for the progress achieved to date in ensuring a smooth implementation of the system and fully support the main principles of the allocation system which are being applied with consistency and which ensure appropriate levels of support for those countries which are most in need, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The modified system is an important policy tool in supporting programme countries in achieving the Millennium Development goals. It will undoubtedly also play a central role in supporting the implementation of commitments made during the Special Session on Children through the efficient allocation of resources to the Medium-Term Strategic Plan.

We note that much progress has been made in a number of countries, including LDCs, in improving U5 mortality rates. As stated in the report, this has delayed the achievement of the 60% target for allocation of resources to this group. While the actual achievement of this target will only be realized in 2005, we are encouraged by progress in meeting this crucial target and hope that even greater progress will be made in upcoming years.

We are pleased to note that our own region has also made significant gains in reducing U5 mortality, improving nutrition, girls education and other key priorities in the Medium-Term Strategic Plan. The region has, however, achieved these gains against considerable odds and in the context of a clear determination on the part of policy-makers to make tangible progress in improving the well-being of children. While the current modified system has served the organization well in allocating resources, we believe that greater attention could be given to ensuring that the system is better geared towards granting greater incentives to those countries which have made significant progress.

In the Executive Director's next report it would be useful to see some recommendations on what special strategies could be introduced to offer greater incentives to programme countries for progress in achieving targets.

On the issue of graduation, we note that UNICEF is reviewing the situation of 10 countries near or above the graduation level. We note that while countries may have achieved the combined GNI per capita and U5 mortality thresholds, progress in these areas is not always sustainable, particularly in per capita income which is subject to reversal as a result of external shocks and the vagaries of the process of globalization. It is therefore important that special focus be given to ensuring a smooth transition which would avoid any sudden disruptions in funding and programme implementation. We therefore encourage UNICEF to continue to closely monitor the impact on children of the withdrawal of resources from the countries identified for graduation.

Finally, we commend UNICEF on the excellent work it continues to do in promoting the well-being of children globally and stand fully in support of its efforts to implement its organizational priorities and the modified system.

***Permanent Mission of Jamaica
To the United Nations, New York
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