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Message from Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
for the
UNA-USA United Nations Day Concert & Dinner Programme

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Message from the Executive Director of UNICEF,

Mr. James P. Grant,

for the UNA-USA United Nations Day Concert & Dinner programme

My colleagues and I in UNICEF are very grateful that UNA-USA has chosen to draw attention to our work and to the situation of children in the world through this salute to the United Nations Children's Fund on our 40th Anniversary.

We stand at the threshold of the greatest breakthrough for children in history. The vastly improved communications capacity and social structure of virtually every country - the product of the monumental development progress of the past four decades - creates the means for reaching, teaching, and supporting parents and families in protecting their children. This capacity combines with newly discovered, low-cost/high-impact techniques and technologies which address the leading killers of children in the world today: malnutrition and malnutrition-related diseases. Together, the capacity to communicate and the techniques with which to communicate give us the possibility of saving millions of young children's lives each year while reducing birth rates and greatly improving the "survivors" prospects for a healthy life.

In 1985 alone, over one million child deaths did not occur as a result of these measures. In the next several years, the current daily toll of 40,000 unnecessary child deaths could be reduced by half at modest cost.

UNICEF is greatly honored to be the focus of this commendation of 40 years of national and international efforts for children - but we are little more than a representation of the commitment which humanity has made, and must make, for its future.

Ultimately, each child who lives and grows today, and each child of future days, is the real celebration of this 40th anniversary.
