

File Sub: CF/EXD/SP/1986-0057

Statement by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
at the conclusion of the
United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities

New York
14 November 1986



UNICEF Alternate Inventory Label



RcF0006HN2

Item # **CF/RAD/USAA/DB01/1998-01990**

ExR/Code: **CF/EXD/SP/1986-0057**

Conclusion of United Nations Pledging Conference for Deve.
Date Label Printed 17-Jan-2002

cover + 4pp + 06

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Mr. President,
distinguished delegates:

May I express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for the way in which you have conducted this Pledging Conference, and my thanks to your Bureau for its effective assistance. I also would like to thank the numerous speakers who commented favourably on the work of UNICEF. Your words are of great encouragement to us.

At this session 79, Governments have announced pledges to UNICEF for a total of \$170.1 million for UNICEF 1987 general resources at the current rates of exchange.

As with UNDP, some Governments, owing to a different fiscal cycle, were not able to specify their pledge at this Conference. However, judging from the past and on the basis of the best current information available, we project for 1987 an additional \$80 million yet to come.

This would bring the government pledges to UNICEF's general resources for 1987 to an estimated total of some \$250 million, which would be about \$23 million more than the 1986 figure. It would represent an increase of about 10% over 1986 and of this, 7% is from higher pledges in national currencies and another 3% from the strengthening of other currencies with respect to the United States dollar in 1986.

This is important, as UNICEF enters all its programme commitments in US dollars. This increase will help UNICEF to somewhat ease the strain on our financial resources that we presently experience due to rising demands and improved efficiency of implementation. Timely payments of contributions remain very urgent, however, since I can assure all donors to general

resources to UNICEF that their contributions will be completely used within a few months at most, and at certain times of the year will be completely used up within a few weeks and even days of receipt by us.

On behalf of UNICEF, I would like to express my gratitude to all those Governments which have announced pledges. We are appreciative of the many Governments which have maintained their contributions in the midst of difficult economic and fiscal circumstances. We are especially grateful to those Governments whose pledges represent increases in their contributions, either in United States dollars or in their national currencies. Some of these increases are very significant, such as the extremely generous increase by the Government of Finland of more than \$6 million, as well as the increase of over 50% announced by the Government of Iceland. I am also most appreciative of the increases of over 20% in either national currency or US dollar equivalent by the Governments of Byelorussian SSR, Denmark, Italy, Monaco, Spain, Ukrainian SSR and the USSR.

Among the other industrialized countries whose pledges have increased by over 10%, I would like to express appreciation to the Governments of Norway, and Switzerland. I would also like to thank the Governments of Austria and Canada for their increased pledges.

A special word of recognition goes to the Government of the German Democratic Republic, whose pledge for 1987 is 150% over that for 1986.

Since UNICEF is a field-based organization, and works with the Governments of 117 developing countries, their contributions are most meaningful for our programmes of co-operation. In particular, I would like to thank the Governments of Bolivia, Botswana, Cameroon, Cyprus and Guatemala, all of whom announced pledge increases of 100% or more. I would also like to thank the Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Chile, China, India, Guyana, Malawi, Maldives, Republic of Korea, Swaziland, and Turkey for their significantly increased contributions. I would like to welcome back the Governments of Central African Republic, Jamaica, Morocco and Somalia, who have again made pledges to UNICEF.

I wish to emphasize that the contributions from the Governments of developing countries have special value and meaning for UNICEF because they are a measure of our joint commitment to the welfare and well-being of children and their immediate environment. In addition to a contribution to UNICEF general resources, the Governments of many developing countries make substantial inputs into our programmes of co-operation, or assist UNICEF in other ways.

Among countries that have not been able to announce their pledges at this Conference owing to differing fiscal cycles, but which considerably increased their contribution in 1986 and will, we hope, consider similar increases also for 1987, I would like to thank the Governments of Japan, New Zealand, and Pakistan. I also wish to thank the Government of Sweden which has indicated a welcome pledge of part of its contribution for 1987, which is already higher

than the contribution announced at the Pledging Conference last year. We would like to note, too, the continued strong support of the United States Government for UNICEF general resources.

Some delegations, as usual, announced pledges to UNICEF supplementary funds for 1987. We thank the Governments of Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and Switzerland, and all the other Governments which will continue to provide generously to UNICEF supplementary funding for 1987, allowing our Organization to be hopeful about meeting the projected target of \$130 million.

UNICEF depends on the support and goodwill not only of Governments but also of the public - and our budget has always depended on a sizeable contribution from private sources. This is a unique feature of UNICEF of which we are very proud. Therefore from the non-governmental sector, we expect in 1987 - via the National Committees for UNICEF, non-governmental organizations, the sale of greeting cards and from individual contributions - some \$42 million. May I take this opportunity to thank all those of you who use UNICEF greeting cards and urge you to continue doing so this year. I also wish to thank your spouses for the all the effort they put into selling our greeting cards.

In its unceasing efforts to meet the increasing needs of children all over the developing world, UNICEF is attempting to increase private sector support for programmes through the new dimension of global mobilization such as Sport Aid last spring and the First Earth Run this fall, which have the dual objectives of increasing not only financial support but also public support for Africa and the International Year of Peace respectively. Sport Aid, jointly sponsored by Band Aid and UNICEF, has now netted some \$30 million, of which a bit more than half is accruing to UNICEF.

Some donor Governments have created global funds which have been earmarked for important child-related programmes. Here I would specifically like to thank the Government of Italy for its very generous support through UNICEF of child survival programmes in 26 African countries, as well as for the seven countries of the Central American Isthmus for a total of well over \$100 million. UNICEF's appreciation also goes to the Government of Canada for having created an immunization fund for Commonwealth countries as well as one for franco-phone countries for a total of CAN\$35 million, and a special CAN\$150 million AFRICA 2000 fund for development needs in Africa over the next 15 years, and to the Government of Norway which has also established a Special Fund for Africa of over \$140 million for Sudano-Sahelian countries.

I also draw your attention to the very important role the United States is playing in the child survival initiative. Thus, the Child Survival Fund, which complements the regular programme of the Agency for International Development has been increased from \$25 million in 1986 to \$75 million for 1987.

As we have noted, however, no matter how useful the creation of special global funds and other supplementary resources made available to UNICEF, I wish to emphasize, as I do each year, that like other agencies such as UNDP and UNFPA, UNICEF survives on general resources, and not on supplementary funds.

On 11 December 1986, UNICEF celebrates its 40th anniversary, at which we hope all of you will join us. In this connection, I wish to mention a special gift of 5 million guilders given to UNICEF by the Government of the Netherlands as a "birthday present"! We dare to hope that during 1987, UNICEF may be the recipient of other such anniversary presents.

There is a wide perception that the emergency in Africa is over. While the emergency which affected children and women in Africa has eased somewhat, the need for special assistance to African countries will remain with us for some time. The crisis is multi-dimensional and the silent emergency continues, as it does in other parts of the world. Hence UNICEF is still, with urgency, seeking funds for our \$100 million appeal announced earlier this year.

These are times of great constraint, when the various members of the United Nations family need to show they can effectively work together, especially the operational agencies. I will speak more on this in the Second Committee. Constrained resources demand this; efficiency demands it; Governments demand it. As Executive Director of UNICEF, I have no hesitation in saying that UNICEF is fully committed to full collaboration, especially but not only in our field operations.

Next month UNICEF will release the State of the World's Children, 1987, which reports that, as a result of support for the potential of a Child Survival and Development Revolution - and particularly through the leading interventions of immunization and oral rehydration therapy - in the past year over 4,000 child deaths did not occur each day. That is a total of over 1.5 million during 1986. This great progress would not have been possible without the vote of confidence in these approaches expressed not only by your financial support to UNICEF, but also by the ongoing efforts of developing countries, and the bilateral assistance provided by many industrialized countries and private organizations. By sustaining and further strengthening this commitment, in the years immediately ahead, there is the very real possibility that the child death rates with their current toll of 40,000 unnecessary child deaths each day could be reduced by half.

By the pledges made at this Conference, and those yet to be made in the year ahead, we will determine how far we can go toward making this possibility a reality.