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Statement by Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
at the
Opening of the 1990 Session of the UNICEF Executive Board

New York
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FOR INFORMATION

Statement by Mr. James P. Grant

Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
at the Opening of the 1990 session of the UNICEF Executive Board

New York - 16 April 1990

I join our Chairman in extending greetings and a warm welcome to the members of the Executive Board and observers, the representatives of the National Committees for UNICEF and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other friends and colleagues.

I also wish to express particularly warm regards for our Chairman, who has taken the tradition of visiting the field to a new level. In her capacity as Chairman of the Programme Committee in 1988 she attended Cocoyoc I - the first regional meeting of health experts and policy makers to help prepare health goals and strategies for children for the 1990s. Last year, as Chairman of the Executive Board, she followed through with participation in Cocoyoc II. She also met with the First Ladies of Central America as their guest of honour in September. Mrs. Dieguez has visited Bangladesh, Egypt and Mozambique to

see first hand UNICEF field programmes and to help our advocacy for children at the highest levels of government. In Spain she met with the National Committee for UNICEF and senior government officials. And finally, last month, she led the UNICEF Board delegation to the historic and successful first meeting with UNESCO of the Joint Committee on Education in Paris. We thank her for the interest she has shown in this wide range of UNICEF activities, and also, I must add, for her successful chairmanship of the Special Session of the Executive Board in December on the World Summit.

Madame Chairman, it is good to be back again, in regular session, with UNICEF's Executive Board. It is like a gathering of the clans - the coming together of so many widespread branches of a family: government officials - leaders for whom their responsibility to UNICEF is not just another chore, but a commitment, National Committee members, representatives of NGOs which have stuck with us in so many efforts, and of course, UNICEF staff from around the world. Our common tie in this gathering is children...children from throughout the world. All of us in this room have our own special roles to play in the common effort of helping to care for a vast family of children. And while we go about our tasks in the different corners of the earth, often far from one another, it is this Board which has set the course that we of the secretariat are on, and it is now time once again to assess the progress of our common efforts on behalf of the children of the world. As I look out among this assemblage, with so many delegates and participants who have made landmark contributions in one effort after another for children, I must say that I am impressed more by our capacity than by the formidable tasks at hand.

Our Chairman, in her opening statement, eloquently highlighted the changes that are transforming the global scene, and noted that it is perhaps only twice or thrice in a century that the possibility of fundamental and essential improvement in our global situation lies close at hand...that now is such a time...and that we must play our full part in the seizing of this opportunity.

When we met a year ago in regular session, I said that UNICEF's most urgent challenge as we enter the 1990s is to find ways to firmly secure the position of children at the center of concern, not only of parents and families, but of communities and nations. History has demonstrated that, until that position is secured, children will all too often be the last to benefit from progress and the first to suffer from economic, political or social deterioration.

We had many hopes when we met a year ago...some said dreams...that seemed at the time to be set at the outer limits of the possible...dreams for more firmly anchoring children at the center of concern. We had great hopes, for example, for the World Conference on Education for All...for the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of the Child...for the success of the Bellagio IV meeting, to fuel a last thrust toward achievement of universal child immunization (UCI) by December 1990. We had dreams that the goals and strategies for children, which were being so carefully refined by experts and policy-makers in the various fields, would galvanize serious commitment for a whole new level of effectiveness in responding to the needs of children during this last decade of the century, when so much more is

possible than has been in the past. And we had dreams for agreement on a major meeting of world leaders to cause a quantum leap in political commitment, at the highest levels, to the issues of children - dreams for a World Summit for Children.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the General Assembly on the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the Child and on the symbolic date of 20 November - the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child - was a landmark attained precisely on schedule, a schedule deemed unattainable by conventional wisdom just five years ago. It was the culmination of a decade of hard work by people at all levels, in governments, among National Committees for UNICEF, public interest groups, NGOs, many volunteer groups committed to children, and many bodies of the United Nations. This Executive Board passed resolutions in 1986, 1987 and 1989 instructing UNICEF's secretariat to work with others toward that landmark, and we did. When the Convention was opened for signature on 26 January, it was signed by a record number of 61 countries.

Madame Chairman, you have just referred to progress toward ratification. It is clear that much must be done urgently if, as you have so eloquently suggested, 20 countries are to have ratified the new charter in time for it to come into force before the World Summit for Children in September. I know we can all count on each other - the Members of the Executive Board within their governments, and the secretariat in its role of advocacy - to do all in our power to see that the Convention is ratified in timely fashion. It is worth noting that these acts, in themselves, will help to create a change for the children of the world - they are the steps to a new legal status. But our fondest hope is that they signal the coming of an even more profound change - the emergence of a new ethic of responsibility with which societies will act toward children, by preparing for full implementation of the principles codified in this new "Magna Carta" for children, including their rights to primary health care and to a primary education.

Basic Education for All

Madame Chairman, our great hopes for the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien, Thailand, in March, were that it would give the impetus to global collaboration in the field of education that the Conference at Alma Ata in 1978 gave in the health field. Despite the short lead time for the Conference (less than half that for Alma Ata), which contributed so much to the earlier widespread apprehensions as to its prospects, 1,425 participants from 156 countries, 140 NGOs and the 22 sponsoring agencies and institutions met at Jomtien, which, coincidentally, in Thai means "supreme light". I would say that we are now well on the way toward an outcome analagous to the success of Alma Ata. Board Members have before them a report of the Conference in document (E/ICEF/1990/L.14).

Especially significant at Jomtien was the strong and widespread commitment to universal primary education (UPE) by the year 2000 - to achieving a minimum level of learning for the great majority of children in literacy, numeracy and basic life skills - with the clear understanding that levels of achievement, rather than enrollment figures, must be used as assessment criteria.

We often hear that there is no development without education, or that education is the great common denominator among efforts to enhance the human dimensions of development. I am convinced that defining a clear top priority - a do-able, cutting edge goal such as the achievement of universal primary education - is a major requirement for achieving broader acceleration along the whole front of basic education. The broader challenge must include expansion of early child development activities, adult literacy programmes, and wider use of media as a third channel of useful learning - but the cutting edge is vital. A major challenge to the success of the UPE effort will be developing measurement mechanisms to determine if achievement targets set at national level are being reached by individuals and by the country as a whole.

I will not list here the full set of contributions that have come from Jomtien, but I will name from the top of that list:

- a strong focus on the disparity in education and a heightened commitment to reducing it;
- a new legitimacy for mobilizing all channels of communication - from media to traditional religious communication networks - in coordination with defined education goals. This has come to be referred to as the "third channel" of education, as distinct from formal and non-formal education; and
- the clear realization that education for all could never be achieved by simply doing more of the same. Innovative means of accelerating people's educational achievement must be designed and implemented.

For an indication of progress on follow-up to Jomtien, I particularly draw the attention of Board Members to the report of the first meeting of the UNESCO-UNICEF Joint Committee on Education (E/ICEF/1990/L.11), which was held less than a month ago in Paris, and to the note by the Executive Director on that meeting (E/ICEF/1990/L.12).

Madame Chairperson, the new level of global commitment to basic education for all which has come from this watershed meeting is vividly reflected in greatly increased allocations proposed for education in the coming years and a new partnership by the four principal sponsors: the UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank.

One of the most important of proposals before this Board, which Board Members will find documented in the medium term plan (E/ICEF/1990/3 paragraph 201), calls for an increase in the percentage of UNICEF's programme funding for basic education from the 7 per cent in 1989 to 15 per cent by 1993, with a

projected increase to 25 per cent by 2000. This could be achieved by keeping actual health expenditures broadly constant in real terms while the overall budget increases, so that the 40 per cent currently allocated to health would consume 25 per cent by the end of the decade, during a period in which, for example, immunization expenses should level off as maternal and child health care infrastructures become more self-sustaining, and universal immunization of children can be maintained, rather than achieved against dramatically lower coverage levels.

It is important to emphasize that investment in basic education, particularly for girls and women, is, in fact, investment in health and nutrition. Much of the great progress in health and nutrition during the 1990s will come through education, which empowers parents and children with knowledge, as we are beginning to see with the Facts for Life initiative. Basic education is also the key, for example, to a meaningful long-term impact on people's responsiveness to environmental concerns and actions for family size. The paper before this Board on Safe Motherhood (E/ICEF/1990/L.13) gives particular attention to the links with birth spacing, and we will address this more fully in the Programme Committee.

Universal child immunization

Madame Chairman, a major shift in circumstances is occurring for the children of the world as a result of another initiative in which this Board has played a major role, and for which its continuing active support is still required. 1990 is, of course, the Year of Universal Child Immunization (UCI), and I am happy to report that, according to the latest WHO statistics, the immunization coverage at the end of 1989 reached 71 per cent globally, and that the gap between measles and DPT3 has now narrowed to 4 per cent. This is a major achievement, considering that only some 20 per cent of the world's children were immunized at the beginning of the decade, before acceleration efforts began. If we can maintain the current momentum and take full advantage of the forthcoming World Summit, immunization coverage will reach 80 per cent globally by the end of 1990. Furthermore, about two-thirds of the world's countries will reach or exceed the UCI goal nationwide. The achievement of UCI at 80 per cent coverage globally will prevent more than 3 million infant and child deaths annually, an impressive million more than I reported last December when releasing the State of the World's Children Report for 1990.

Already we have a significant achievement of which we can all be extremely proud. The success has been particularly due to two forces: the commitment of developing countries to reach all of their children, and excellent international collaboration. Virtually every country has shown ingenuity and commitment in their immunization efforts - and support from regional and country offices of WHO has often been of importance. Especially large-scale providers of financial assistance in this historic effort have been Canada, Italy, Norway, Sweden, the U.K., the U.S.A., and Rotary International, the latter alone providing some US\$240 million.

The challenge immediately beyond the December 1990 target will be to sustain the levels attained, to achieve UCI in every country and to advance on further goals in immunization such as eradication of polio by the year 2000.

World Summit for Children

Madame Chairman, progress to date toward the World Summit for Children - including the supportive measures taken by this Board at its special session in December - is another major sign that children's issues are being taken far more seriously in many countries. What better symbol could manifest the fact that awareness of children's issues is rising higher on the world's political agenda than the convening of the first North-South-East-West Summit in history, to deal with an agenda devoted solely to children!

The Board discussion on the Summit agenda, scheduled for Friday, will be opened with a report by the co-chair of the Planning Committee, Ambassador Yves Fortier. This will be one of the major items for review by this Board. Your comments will have an important influence for the substance of the Declaration and accompanying plan of action by the Summit. As you may remember, the Executive Board in its resolution last December anticipated a special session later in the year to comment on Summit preparations. A Board document is available on this topic, entitled "Progress Report on Preparations for the World Summit for Children" (E/ICEF/1990/12).

The Planning Committee now numbers 27 members, accommodating interested governments, as this Executive Board encouraged. It has met twice, in January and in March, and is scheduled to meet again in June to take into account the comments and contributions of this Executive Board and of the work of the Planning Committee's two Working Groups - on the Declaration and on the Format of the meeting. Prime Ministers Brian Mulroney of Canada and Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan have been chosen co-chairs for the Summit.

The Executive Board will need to discuss the budgetary proposals for both the Summit and for the accompanying social mobilization activities for which ceilings have been set of US\$1.5 million and US\$2 million respectively and for which more than US\$1 million has been pledged to date.

Goals and strategies for children in the 1990s - doing the do-able

Madame Chairman, we now have the capacity to save and improve the lives of vast numbers of the world's children at extremely low cost, both financially and politically. This is one of the changes to which the international community, and people throughout the world, are still adjusting. This new capacity has given rise to the dream by UNICEF and its many allies to establish priorities on what is do-able for children, to plan with each country for their achievement of their goals, and to use UNICEF experience and resources in each country to help implement the plans. The goals listed in the paper before you, "Development Goals and Strategies for Children in the 1990s" (E/ICEF/1990/L.5) - a summary of which is attached to the distribution version of this statement - are the culmination of an extraordinarily extensive consultative process.

Many of the goals, as you know, originated at the Bellagio III meeting in Talloires, where sponsoring delegations were led by the executive heads of the WHO, the World Bank, UNICEF and the Rockefeller Foundation. More than a dozen health ministers and secretaries participated, including those from China, India, Indonesia, Mexico and Nigeria. The Executive Boards of UNICEF and WHO have since reviewed and endorsed the goals. They have undergone extensive critical review since in a wide variety of regional meetings, and have been refined after scrutiny in such fora as Bellagio IV, the World Conference on Education for All, and Cocoyoc II. Madame Chairman, Board Members will note that the refinements to the goals which have been made since the goals and strategies paper was completed are explained in the paper "Revised Goals for Children and Development in the 1990s" (E/ICEF/1990/CRP.2). In the 44 years of UNICEF's history, no policy paper has been presented which rests on so much careful review and participation at country, regional and global levels. We are pleased therefore to present these, not just as "UNICEF's goals", but as goals reflecting the judgement and aspirations of the leading experts, policy-makers and agencies in the field. These goals are also serving as the focus for closer and more effective collaboration with other sister agencies and organizations within the U.N. system - a process which has advanced considerably over the last year and to which UNICEF itself has contributed through our field level action and our chairmanship of a number of ACC sub-committees.

It is important to emphasize that the activities outlined in the UNICEF strategies paper for children in the 1990s can also be expected to benefit the environment. On World Environment Day, 5 June, I will launch with UNEP a special joint report on "Children and the Environment", in Mexico City. As stated in the strategies paper, (paragraph 71):

"A human environment characterized by high rates of morbidity, mortality, fertility, illiteracy and ignorance is not conducive to sustainable development. The CSD goals proposed for the 1990s seek to improve this environment by combating disease and malnutrition and promoting education. This contributes to lower birth rates and death rates, improved social services, better use of natural resources and, ultimately, to the breaking down of the vicious cycle of poverty and environmental degradation."

It is noteworthy that our confidence that these goals can be achieved is built upon the major advances made through child survival and development activities, and particularly universal child immunization. Having learned what works in relatively straightforward goals, we are ready to apply the lessons to the more complex goals identified for the 1990s.

We do not expect that every country will or can pursue every goal at once. But our medium term plan explains that we do anticipate that in every country UNICEF's programmes of support will, with governments, be directed toward achieving some appropriate set of goals in the main sectors of health, education (with an emphasis on gender equity), water and sanitation and nutrition.

Each of the goals must of course be adapted to the specifics of each country situation, and the decision of which goals to emphasize must ultimately be made at country level. We anticipate a comprehensive consultative process similar to that which has contributed to the global goals. There must also be regional emphasis, as set out in the regional sections of the medium term plan. Africa has been the region of fastest growing UNICEF expenditure in the 1980s - and because of its special needs, will remain the region of highest UNICEF priority in the 1990s, measured by per capita support, and as confirmed by previous meetings of this Board. But in total, Asia is still UNICEF's largest area of programme expenditure. Latin America and the Middle East also have their particular needs, and UNICEF's special initiatives such as the Special Adjustment Facility for Latin America and the Caribbean (SAFLAC) and the Under-five Mortality Fund are seen as well-adapted to respond to the various needs.

Taken together, this set of individually do-able goals represents the most ambitious endeavour for children ever undertaken. I personally doubt that they would be achievable as a group without the tremendous infusion of commitment and support that could be generated by the World Summit for Children.

Funding of UNICEF's programmes

Madame Chairperson, Board Members will note that the medium term plan takes the conservative approach of projecting 3 per cent real growth while setting a fund-raising strategy of 6 per cent. As stated in the document (E/ICEF/1990/3 paragraph 155):

"...It is estimated that an annual real growth of 3 per cent (7 per cent in nominal terms with an estimated 4 per cent inflation) is a minimum requirement for UNICEF to make an effective contribution to the implementation of the operational strategy for children for the 1990s. UNICEF could make an even more effective contribution, however, with annual real growth of up to 6 per cent. This could be managed within the existing structure, with some adjustments of programme planning levels and staff. UNICEF fund-raising efforts, therefore, will seek to achieve real growth of 6 per cent a year. Nevertheless, budget and programme expenditure in the medium-term plan are based on the more conservative 3 per cent annual real growth. Increased funding will be sought particularly for education and, as indicated in the financial plan, nutrition and water and sanitation will also require increased resources. Funding for health programmes will retain its present priority."

It is also noteworthy that, as stated in paragraph 154:

"...UNICEF income has increased from US\$253 million in 1979 to US\$660 million in 1989. While ODA globally in the 1980s was stagnant in real terms, UNICEF income stayed ahead of inflation and actually increased some 3 per cent a year (approximately 10 per cent a year in nominal terms)."

External Relations

UNICEF's External Relations has retained the attention of the Executive Board through recent years, and we are indebted to the Board for having triggered an evaluation of our effectiveness in this important area of work. While confirming that, on the whole, UNICEF's activities in this field have been quite effective - as the report states: "perhaps more so than for any other U.N. agency" (E/ICEF/1990/L.4 Annex II paragraph 1), the evaluation has - very importantly - allowed us to focus on a number of areas for potential improvement. We have taken this evaluation very seriously. Our recommendations in the Board document "UNICEF External Relations Policies and Functions" (E/ICEF/1989/L.4) build directly on this report, and we have become convinced that this will enable us to operate the organization's external relations functions as one harmonious whole. We look toward using the instruments of advocacy, information and fundraising to more effectively support UNICEF's programmes, and we believe the evaluation has made a major contribution toward these ends. Similarly, we look to it for guidance in our work to improve and refine co-operation with our indispensable partners, the National Committees. A full day of Programme Committee discussions, Monday, next week, will be dedicated to the subject of External Relations, and I look forward to a thoughtful and productive debate.

Board Members will note that, in addition to the External Relations paper, in both the Strategies paper (E/ECEF/1990/L.5 - paragraphs 124-133) and in the medium term plan (E/ICEF/1990/3 - paragraphs 139-160), issues of external relations, especially social mobilization, information and advocacy, have been referred to in their relevant programme and country contexts.

Children in exceptional circumstances

Madame Chairperson, four situations exist today in which children are in particular need, and we need to search for an effective way to make a contribution and bring them more to the center of concern.

- 1) In South Africa, the pernicious evils of apartheid is agonizingly revealed by a child death rate 10 times higher for blacks than for whites, and the evolving situation creates the opportunity for some non-racial NGOs to operate independently of the government, giving hope of reaching those in need while adhering to General Assembly policy.
- 2) In virtually every civil conflict in the 1980s, many children died for every soldier who was killed. This has certainly been true, for example, whether we look in the Sudan, Lebanon, Angola or Mozambique.
- 3) In Eastern Europe, new policies of restructuring and openness are creating some problems, especially for the most vulnerable, during transition, and are revealing some long-standing problems for children which could potentially be solved through the benefit of recent experiences elsewhere.

- 4) With respect to children affected by AIDS, conditions are rapidly worsening in many countries in the numbers and situations of orphans and street children. Ten of the most affected African countries, with a population of 137 million and nearly 7 million births annually, may lose 2.5 million children by 2000, reaching .5 million annually by 2000, with the additional loss of .5 million mothers annually by 2000. This would leave 3 to 6 million AIDS orphans by that year. In some cities, one-third of pregnant women are registering HIV-positive.

Madame Chairman, I would like to comment briefly on UNICEF's possible role in each of these situations and for which Board guidance is desired. These will be up for action in the Programme Committee. A conference room paper is available on children in Eastern Europe (E/ICEF/1990/CRP.4), Board documents have been prepared on "UNICEF Support for Children and Women in South Africa" (E/ICEF/1990/L.42) and on the impact of AIDS on women and children (E/ICEF/1990/P/L.34), and the issue of children in especially difficult circumstances is addressed in the medium term plan. Informal sessions are scheduled on children in South Africa, for tomorrow, 17 April; children in industrialized countries, Wednesday, 18 April; children with AIDS, Monday, the 23rd; and on children in armed conflict, for Wednesday the 25th.

Children in South Africa

Regarding children in South Africa, the paper before this Board articulates means to reach children in need while respecting General Assembly policies, and I draw the attention of Board members particularly to paragraph 12, which notes that, "In 1989, it was decided that the evolving situation in South Africa presented some NGOs with the opportunity to respond to the needs of children in South Africa ... It was also decided that some of those NGOs could benefit from exposure to the UNICEF approach to the planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of programmes for child survival, protection and development". Assistance of up to US\$1 million a year is proposed.

Children in war

Regarding children in war, UNICEF's policy from its inception has recognized that the organization should seek to reach children everywhere, even in the midst of war. This explains the worldwide acceptance that UNICEF's working relations with local authorities do not constitute any form of legitimization or recognition of that local authority.

During the 1980s UNICEF has, for the first time, sought to find ways to insulate or buffer children from the consequences of the actual conflict. Thus the emergence of the concept of the Days of Tranquility, pioneered in El Salvador in 1985 and continued even through this year under the new government. April 1st was observed as a day of tranquility for immunization. The concept has been copied - again just this past week in Lebanon, where

three days of tranquility allowed for the immunization of children. That concept was adopted in 1989 in the Sudan, with corridors of tranquility to enable the shipment of 120,000 tons of supplies into conflict areas, and the consequent avoidance of a repetition of the tragedy of 1988 in which 250,000 civilians died - the majority of them children - as a result of the conflict.

The challenge in 1990 is how to maintain this principle in the Sudan, where civil war continues, and how to extend it to other countries in the Horn of Africa, where millions of children are at great risk because of civil conflict.

Children in Eastern Europe

Regarding Eastern Europe, the issue has been raised, and we are all aware of it. It will be addressed fully in the Programme Committee, of course, but I would like to say at this point:

- 1) Looking at UNICEF's mandate of global concern for children, there is a strong feeling that we cannot fail to respond to formal requests. Indeed, UNICEF's very origins began with the needs of children in Europe, China and Japan as a consequence of World War II.
- 2) Our response must in no way be at the expense of our priority cooperation with developing countries, nor should it involve even the impression that we are turning away or diminishing our commitment to children in the developing world.

I trust that Board Members will see these two concerns echoed in our paper, which emphasizes technical assistance and the sharing of experience. I would myself envisage using less than US\$1 million a year of UNICEF's general resources for such purposes - under a quarter of 1 per cent.

Children affected by AIDS

Regarding children affected by AIDS, UNICEF's involvement in the AIDS orphans and street children issues is increasing as conditions worsen. The paper before this Board proposes expenditures of approximately US\$2 million annually through 1992, half from general resources and half from supplementary funding. These funds would clearly serve as seed money into country programmes, as distinct from expenditures in either Eastern Europe or South Africa, where UNICEF does not have country programmes.

Positive aspects of changing times

Madame Chairman, as you have so eloquently described, we are living in an historic era of great change. The five great dreams for moving children more to the center of concern that have been coming into reality during the past year with the encouragement and support of this Board are among the brightest and most positive aspects of such change. The Board called, in 1983, for the

CSDR, and in 1985 for the particular emphasis on UCI. Resolutions were passed three times, as I mentioned earlier, in support of the Convention. Just one year ago this Board called for a World Conference on Education for All. The 1989 Board also called for development goals and strategies for children for the 1990s. At the last regular session, a majority of Board members spoke in favor of a World Summit for Children, and in special session in December, this Board welcomed the initiative of the six governments which called for the Summit.

We are at a point now at which all of these dreams and initiatives are becoming mutually reinforcing - they are accelerating each other. Thus, progress on CSDR and especially UCI brought many new participants into involvement in child-related issues, and those participants became predisposed to take seriously the Convention on the Rights of the Child. And while success in CSD and UCI gave us confidence that the seemingly overwhelming task of bringing the Convention into force could actually be accomplished, new attention to children's rights stirred by activities in support of the Convention in turn raised people's awareness that providing health services for children was not just a nice thing to do: it is the obligation of adult society.

Each of these issues was accelerated by the momentum of the other. A new status for issues related to children and an increasing awareness of how very much is possible on behalf of children for so little a cost, both of which grew out of these two efforts, contributed greatly to progress toward the World Summit. The Summit in turn is now having an accelerating effect on both the ratification and implementation of the Convention and on CSDR activities, especially UCI, as world leaders focus on their countries' accomplishments in these arenas in preparation for their own participation at the historic gathering. And in fact, as preparations for the Summit and its follow-up progress, it is becoming clear that it is the boost which the Summit will give to action on behalf of children which now brings within human reach the goals and strategies for children in the 1990s (which gained their initial momentum from the CSDR). The import of this synergistic interaction of efforts is reflected in the projection that, if the goals are realized, the lives of 50 million children will be saved during this decade.

Likewise, attention to children's issues stimulated by support for the Convention as well as confidence won through progress on UCI contributed greatly to the tremendous creativity required to convene the World Conference on Education for All as an Alma Ata for Education on such short notice. It was also the lessons learned through using UCI as a cutting edge of primary health care which inspired the commitment to universal primary education for all by 2000. In this mounting synergistic interaction, progress in education can be counted on for a profound sustainable contribution to children's health, the assurance that their rights are met, and maintaining their rightful place, high on the world's political agendas.

It is leadership such as that which has encouraged these results that has

made the UNICEF Board not just another meeting, but a body that reviews the needs and possibilities for children with concern, commitment and professionalism. Now once again, as we turn to a full agenda, we the secretariat look to the Board for guidance, for decisions and for support. We welcome the opportunity of the next two weeks to hear Members review and decide on the many matters, the many documents reflecting past work and future possibilities. We know we can count on the same concern, commitment, professionalism and support that UNICEF has experienced so completely in the past.

GOALS FOR CHILDREN AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1990s

The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child embodies the most comprehensive listing of goals for the well-being of children. Full implementation of the Convention is the ultimate objective of programmes for children and development. The following goals, derived through a process of extensive international consultation, are essential means to achieve that ultimate objective.

I. Major Goals for Child Survival, Development and Protection

- Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of infant and under-5 child mortality rate in all countries by one-third or to 50 and 70 per 1000 live births respectively, whichever is less.
- Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of maternal mortality rate by half.
- Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half.
- Universal access to safe drinking water and to sanitary means of excreta disposal.
- By the year 2000, universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80% of primary school age children.
- Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level with emphasis on female literacy.
- Improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances.

II. Supporting/Sectoral Goals

1. Women's Health and Education

- Special attention to the health and nutrition of the female child, and pregnant and lactating women.
- Access by all couples to information and services to prevent pregnancies which are too early, too closely spaced, too late or too many.
- Access by all pregnant women to prenatal care, trained attendants during child birth and referral facilities for high risk pregnancies and obstetric emergencies.
- Universal access to primary education with special emphasis for girls, and accelerated literacy programmes for women.

2. Nutrition

- Reduction in severe as well as moderate malnutrition among under-5 children by half of 1990 levels.
- Reduction of the rate of low birth weight (2.5 kg or less) to less than 10%.
- Reduction of iron deficiency anaemia in women by one-third of 1990 levels.
- Virtual elimination of iodine deficiency disorders.
- Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences, including blindness.
- Empowerment of all women to exclusively breast-feed their child for four to six months and to continue breast-feeding with complementary food well into the second year.

- Growth promotion and its regular monitoring to be institutionalized in all countries by the end of the 1990s.
- Dissemination of knowledge and supporting services to increase food production to ensure household food security.

3. Child Health

- Global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000.
- Elimination of neonatal tetanus by 1995.
- Reduction by 95 percent in measles deaths and reduction by 90 per cent of measles cases compared to pre-immunisation levels by 1995, as a major step to the global eradication of measles in the longer run.
- Maintenance of a high level of immunisation coverage (at least 85% of children under one year of age) against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, tuberculosis and against tetanus for women of child bearing age.
- Reduction by 50 per cent in the deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of five years; and 25 per cent reduction in the diarrhoea incidence rate.
- Reduction by one-third in the deaths due to acute respiratory infections in children under five years.

4. Water and Sanitation

- Universal access to safe drinking water.
- Universal access to sanitary means of excreta disposal.
- Elimination of guinea-worm disease (dracunculiasis) by the year 2000.

5. Basic Education

- Expansion of early childhood development activities including appropriate low-cost family and community based interventions.
- Universal access to basic education, and achievement of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school age children through formal schooling or non-formal education of comparable learning standard, with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls.
- Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least half its 1990 level, with emphasis on female literacy.
- Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living, made available through all educational channels, including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication, and social action, with effectiveness measured in terms of behavioural change.

6. Children in Difficult Circumstances

- Provide improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances and tackle the root causes leading to such situations.

ESTIMATED CHILD DEATHS AND LIVES SAVED 1990 - 2000

1990 - 2000

