Preparatory process for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD). Discussion of the FfD elements paper.

Statement on behalf of UNICEF

Nicholas Alipui, Director & Senior Advisor Post 2015 Development Agenda

27 January 2015

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of UNICEF.

Distinguished Co-Facilitators,

We welcome the draft elements paper on Financing for Development. The paper does an excellent job outlining opportunities and challenges in meeting the financing needs of the ambitious SDG agenda. We applaud the paper's emphasis on the coordination of relevant ongoing processes and fora, including - but not limited to - the Open Working Group on the SDGs, Rio+20, and the synthesis report of the Secretary General.

On behalf of the world's children and future generations, we would like member states to consider the following observations in their deliberations.

1. We believe it is very important to b**roaden the discussion of sustainable development finance to include investments in children as an essential building block of the sustainable and equitable growth agenda.** Studies by renowned economists and researchers around the world show that investments in children's nutrition, cognitive development, and improving the social and physical environments children grow up in, are crucial investments in a nation's future 'human capital'. The value for money generated from these interventions diminishes if investments are delayed beyond a certain age of the child. This time sensitivity creates a strong case for including child-related policies and programmes as a cross cutting investment priority under the SDG agenda.

2. The time-sensitivity of interventions in children's development also requires **careful coordination of these investments with other financing and investment priorities.** Too often programmes that matter most to children and other vulnerable groups are

reduced in times of economic difficulty or crisis. We suggest to **acknowledge their importance and the importance of timely and adequate spending on safety nets, child protection, and other social services** and to incorporate them in the long-term financing and debt-servicing strategies of countries.

3. Private and innovative sources of finance will be of increasing importance in the financing of new our SDG priorities. However, private finance often does not serve poor families and communities who lack purchasing power very well. **We recommend to acknowledge more strongly the public sector's particular responsibility in addressing inequalities and basic needs. This can include the adoption of national social protection floors, which are already mentioned in the elements paper, as well the provision of universal basic public services and targeted interventions to groups with the highest incidences of vulnerability and deprivation.**

4. **International public finance will continue to play an important role in creating a world that is fit for children.** The introduction of adequately funded social protection floors is still out of reach for many least developed countries. Under-nutrition and child mortality remain major challenges at alarmingly high levels, including in countries that have recently made the transition to middle income status. The recent Ebola crisis underscored the fact that insufficiently developed health services pose risks beyond borders. We ask advanced economies to honour existing ODA commitments, halt the decrease of ODA to countries with the greatest financing gaps in areas that matter to children, and to seriously consider strengthening financing mechanisms to enhance responses to humanitarian emergencies and invest in resilience. We also welcome all efforts to maximize the wider impacts of international climate finance by identifying and prioritizing investments with the greatest co-benefits and synergies for other SDG priorities, including child development, health, education, access to energy and disaster-risk reduction.

5. Experience with the Convention of the Rights of the Child indicates that detailed and regular reporting on expenditures is the first step towards ensuring that political commitments are implemented on the ground. Drawing on this experience **we welcome the mentioning of transparent and participatory budgetary procedures**

in the elements paper. Reforms in this area should also be closely **coordinated with parallel debates about the SDG Means of Implementation and Participatory Monitoring and Accountability**. We suggest to **add stronger language on the need to link domestic and international public spending to outcome indicators, along with more detailed and disaggregated reporting of spending and results for vulnerable groups, including children and women.**

Thank you!