

Statement by Mr. Prakash Gupta, First Secretary, on Agenda Item 11 during
Pledging Event at the First Regular Session 2014 of the UNICEF Executive Board
on February 6, 2014

Mr. President,

India's close and productive association with UNICEF dates back to the agency's inception and is based on our strong and abiding faith in the relevance of UNICEF's message and mandate.

As home to one fifth of the children in the world, India is steadfastly committed to the cause of ensuring the basic needs of children and in helping create protective and nurturing environments for them to reach their full potential.

Mr. President,

As outlined in our Statement at the Plenary Session, 2013 was the third year running, when we reported no new cases of polio, and India was officially designated "polio free". This was a significant milestone in our polio eradication effort, and we thank all partner agencies who assisted us in this endeavour.

The Government of India and the UNICEF country programme of cooperation is one of the largest and most diverse UNICEF supported country programmes globally.

From your presentation today, we note with concern the decline in core resources available for UNICEF's programming activities and we hope that this would be addressed sooner than later.

In this regard, I wish to inform the Board that the Government of India **has already pledged US \$900,000 to UNICEF for the year 2014**. The announcement to this effect was made by India at the 2013 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities held on 11th November, last year.

To conclude, we would like to once again express our sincere appreciation for UNICEF's efforts in fulfilling our common vision, for an early realisation of children friendly environments universally.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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