

**STATEMENT OF LYNN STRATFORD
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UNITED STATES FUND FOR UNICEF**

**BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND
RELATED PROGRAMS
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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Madam Chairwoman and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of nearly one million American supporters of the United States Fund for UNICEF, I appreciate this opportunity to submit testimony regarding the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide at least \$135 million as the U.S. Government's voluntary contribution to UNICEF under the International Organizations and Programs Account for Fiscal Year 2014.

Let me thank the Subcommittee for its support for the contribution to UNICEF for Fiscal Year 2013. I commend the bipartisan leadership this Subcommittee has taken to champion programs that help children around the world.

Since its creation in 1947, UNICEF has saved more children's lives than any humanitarian organization in the world. UNICEF staff work on the ground in developing and transitional countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. UNICEF supports prenatal care, child health and nutrition, clean water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and protecting children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS.

All of UNICEF's funding comes from voluntary contributions from governments, businesses, foundations, and individuals. In fact, 40 per cent of UNICEF's total funding comes from non-

government sources. As an organization completely funded by voluntary contributions, UNICEF makes sure that its operations are efficient and focused on results where they matter – for vulnerable children around the world. More than 90 per cent of UNICEF’s funds support program activities.

Thanks to strong support from the U.S. Congress for UNICEF and for child survival, the number of children dying before age five dropped by more than half since 1960, from an estimated 20 million deaths to 6.9 million in 2012. Almost one-third of the 50 least-developed countries have reduced child mortality rates by 40 percent or more since 1990 – proof that progress for children is possible even in poor countries. We believe that it is possible to end preventable child deaths globally in a generation, with continued investment in cost-effective, coordinated interventions for children and mothers. UNICEF’s efforts around the world implement the compassion of the American people by helping children and families. That is why UNICEF enjoys incredible backing from Americans for its mission of child survival and development, from children participating in “Trick or Treat for UNICEF,” to major corporations donating money and products. That private support is critical to UNICEF’s success in saving children’s lives from measles and cholera, providing access to clean water, helping children stay in school, and thwarting child traffickers trying to exploit vulnerable children.

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF is also proud of its partnerships with the private sector to save children’s lives. Among many examples, the Caterpillar Foundation is funding education and health projects through UNICEF in three African countries; American Airlines employee volunteers are collecting donations to UNICEF of foreign currency from customers on selected international flights; and UPS made a multi-year commitment to provide shipping services and improve UNICEF’s supply chain and logistics systems.

The U.S. Government's longstanding and generous support of UNICEF allows it to leverage private sector funding and work with U.S. Government programs to make a real difference in saving children's lives:

For more than 50 years, UNICEF has been a world leader in immunizations, and is the world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries. In 2011, UNICEF procured 2.5 billion doses of vaccines for 103 countries, as well as 432 million auto-disable syringes to ensure those vaccines can be delivered safely. UNICEF procures vaccines for the GAVI Alliance; and also buys all vaccines and related items for global campaigns not covered by GAVI, including polio eradication, elimination of neonatal and maternal tetanus, and measles control. In addition, UNICEF works in-country to ensure that vaccines reach even the poorest children and communities.

Malaria remains a major threat to children. UNICEF is one of the largest buyers of mosquito nets in the world, delivering more than 25 million bed nets to 36 countries in 2011.

About 150 million children under five – one in four – are malnourished, and malnutrition contributes to up to a third of all child deaths. We know that therapeutic foods can help to bring a child back from the verge of starvation. In 2011, UNICEF provided 27,000 tons of ready-to-eat therapeutic foods, and 140 million sachets of micronutrient powder to help supplement children's diets.

In 2011, UNICEF Supply improved transparency around the prices it pays for strategic essential supplies, including vaccines, RUTF and bed nets. The publishing of prices supports governments and partners in making more informed decisions about procurement.

Kiwanis International partners with UNICEF for The Eliminate Project, the current Kiwanis global campaign to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT). One newborn dies every nine minutes from tetanus. Our collaboration with Kiwanis is a global campaign to save the lives of babies by eliminating MNT. The Global Polio Eradication Initiative, a partnership led by UNICEF, Rotary International, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, and others, helped reduce polio cases by more than 99 percent over the past two decades, from more than 350,000 cases in 1988 to an estimated 250 cases in 2012. This is incredible progress and the end of polio is within reach – but we can't stop now. UNICEF and its partners continue to support massive immunization campaigns to eradicate once and for all this terrible disease. UNICEF's established presence in developing countries makes it a critical partner for the U.S. Government in responding to major crises. For example, UNICEF provides health, nutrition, water/sanitation, and child protection interventions for hundreds of thousands of children affected by the violence in Syria, both within Syria and for refugees in surrounding countries. UNICEF humanitarian programs throughout the region have vaccinated 1.4 million children against measles, ensured that 66,000 children out of school have access to learning programs, provided 100,000 people with access to clean drinking water, and gave 57,000 children access to psychosocial support to deal with the impacts of conflict and displacement.

UNICEF's ability to partner with the U.S. Government, and with important nonprofit partners like Kiwanis, Rotary, the American Red Cross, and the GAVI Alliance, depends on a strong U.S. contribution to UNICEF, as well as maintaining U.S. support for its bilateral child health programs. In this regard, the U.S. Fund for UNICEF supports the funding requested by our partners for Iodine Deficiency Disorders, Polio Eradication, and the GAVI Alliance. Because of the importance of U.S. child survival and health programs, our organization also asks the U.S.

Congress to provide \$750 million for the Maternal and Child Health Account in Fiscal Year 2014.

Annual government contributions to UNICEF's regular resources budget constitute the single most important funding source UNICEF worldwide. The U.S. Government's voluntary contribution to UNICEF's regular resources provides the foundation for UNICEF's work to save children's lives and improve their futures. Resources provided by this Subcommittee are critical to UNICEF's ability to help the United States in international humanitarian crises, conflict areas, and emerging threats to the well-being of children.

Madam Chairwoman, this Subcommittee has long been a champion for the well-being of the world's children, ensuring that children are a priority of U.S. foreign assistance funding. American advocates of UNICEF's work for the world's children salute the bipartisan support this Subcommittee has provided for child survival and for UNICEF. We believe that UNICEF is an indispensable partner of the United States on initiatives to save lives and protect vulnerable children around the world.

We cannot rest on our past successes. Unfortunately, 6.9 million children under five still die every year, mostly from preventable causes. Put another way, a child is dying every five seconds. We believe that number should be zero. A strong commitment from the United States will strengthen UNICEF's capacity to meet the needs of vulnerable children, in partnership with Americans who care about children everywhere.

I respectfully ask the Subcommittee to provide \$135 million under the International Organizations and Program Account for UNICEF's regular resources for Fiscal Year 2014.