Mr. Chairman,

I and my delegation on behalf of India thank the Secretary-General for his reports on children.

Children are important for our future. For the “World Fit for Children”, we must give priority for their welfare and rights.
Secretary-General in his reports mentioned that 9 million children are dying before they reach one year of age, 75 million children do not have access for education, as well as 200 million are handicapped due to malnutrition and lack of healthcare.

Official Development Assistance (ODA) increased last year but there is a shortfall.

Mr. Chairman,

Secretary-General said India has eliminated tetanus in children and pregnant women in some parts of the country. India is taking all efforts for 100% eradication of Polio, tuberculosis and Diphtheria in India.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to enlighten what we have done in India for children. 35 years back in 1975, we started Integrated Child Development Scheme. Under this Scheme, presently, we have nearly 140,000 Anganwadi children development schools to give nutritious meal to 34 million children and 7 million pregnant women.

Through the National Rural Health Mission, we are encouraging hospital delivery for all pregnant women. After delivery, we are giving financial assistance to needy for purchase of clothes for the new born, soaps for the new born and cradle for the new born children. We have also earmarked 100 million US dollars for building world class children hospitals in various parts of India, including my hometown, Tirupathi, in the State of Andhra Pradesh.
Mr. Chairman,

With the efforts of Madam Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of United Progressive Alliance, Government of India, we are having mid-day meal programme for 140 million children every day in the schools. With this programme, we are giving high protein diet, eggs and fish twice a week to these children.

Mr. Chairman,

We enacted the Right to Education Act in order to provide free and compulsory education for all children below the age of 14 years. We also got an Act of the Parliament to ban child labour and violence against children.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to quote the famous man Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, former Prime Minister of India. He said, “Children are our future. Investment in the future and health care of the children will be more useful to the world”.

Mr. Chairman,

I conclude here by saying that India is the country, which is taking care of children from day one of the life in the womb till they attain the age of 14 years, the health, welfare, protection and rights.

No world can be safe unless we protect our own children for the future. I request the international community, all the leaders in the world to safeguard millions of children dying in infancy, millions of children who do not have access for education and millions of children who do not have nutritious food and healthcare by increasing ODA (Official Development Assistance) and see that there is no shortfall in these finances.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

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