**Statement by Hungary**

**Annual Discussion on Rights of the Child**

**46th session of the Human Rights Council**

**1 March 2021**

Madam President,

Hungary aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the EU.

We thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children for her annual report focusing on the unprecedented and long-term impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic on children’s protection and well-being, as well as the role of children as agents of change in building a world free from fear and all forms of violence against children.

We very much welcome the work pushed forward by Ms. Najat Maalla M’jid in 2020, the year marked by the COVID-19 pandemic and its harmful impact, which hit those in vulnerable situations the hardest.

Hungary fully shares the view that today, when the world is at a crucial point with regard to the lives of a generation of children, all must be done to safeguard that children do not become the main victims of the pandemic, and to build a better world where children’s rights are promoted and protected and where no child is left behind.

In Hungary, the Fundamental Law has already explicitly enshrined the right of children to the protection and care necessary for their proper physical, mental and moral development. Hungary protects the institution of the family based on marriage and the parent-child relationship. The Government aims to strengthen the measures supporting responsible childbearing and the upbringing of children, popularize the family friendly public thinking in order to support the positive tendencies in demographic processes, raise awareness and strengthen the communication representing family values and focusing on children and families.

Madam President,

The protection of the rights of the child is of utmost importance for Hungary, hence we wish to reiterate our readiness and continued commitment to support the work of the SRSG in keeping the promise contained in the 2030 Agenda and end the pandemic of violence against children.

One of the Government’s high priority objectives is the assurance of receiving all the resources and services, which are vital for children’s physical, mental and spiritual development, even during lockdowns, quarantines and other types of restrictions. We all see, that the pandemic and the mitigation measures taken have reduced the capacity of essential services to effectively prevent and respond to violence and threaten to undermine the progress for children promised in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We cannot agree more that children urgently need sustainably financed social protection systems linked to properly resourced child-protection services and it must be assured that in the rebuilding phase, child protection is recognized as a life-saving and vital service, along with health, early childhood development, mental health and education.

Madam President,

Let us reassure this very Council that Hungary continues its full commitment toward the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, and we are ready to move towards a world free from fear and all forms of violence against children.

I thank you, Madam President!