THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Message on COVID 19

New York, 11 March 2020

All of us face a common threat – the coronavirus – COVID 19.

Today’s declaration of a pandemic is a call to action – for everyone, everywhere.

It’s also a call for responsibility and solidarity – as nations united and as people united.

As we fight the virus, we cannot let fear go viral.

Together, we can still change the course of this pandemic – but that means addressing inaction.

The best science tells us, if countries detect, test, treat, isolate, trace and mobilize their people in the response, we can go a long way to mitigating transmission.

I call on every government to step up and scale up their efforts – now.

And since this is a crisis that affects everyone, we must all play our part.
As we mourn all those who have lost their lives and the many families who are suffering, we must show solidarity with the most vulnerable – the elderly, the sick, those without reliable healthcare, and those on the edge of poverty.

Let’s move forward with resolve and without stigma.

You can count on the UN to do our part.

Let’s overcome this common threat together.

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UNICEF STATEMENT

UNICEF statement on COVID-19 outbreak

NEW YORK, 11 March 2020 – “Characterizing COVID-19 as a pandemic is not an indication that the virus has become deadlier. Rather, it is an acknowledgement of the disease’s geographical spread.

“UNICEF has been preparing and responding to the epidemic of COVID-19 around the world, knowing that the virus could spread to children and families in any country or community.

“We will continue working with governments and our partners to stop transmission of the virus, and to keep children and their families safe.

“At the same time, we remain very concerned by the secondary impacts of the outbreak and related control measures on children, including school closures, the burden on local health systems for the delivery of primary care, protection risks and economic pressures felt by some families.

“Fear of the virus is also contributing to discrimination against people from vulnerable groups, including refugees and migrants – this is unacceptable.

“We remain on the ground working in affected communities to mitigate secondary impacts for children and push back against stigmatization.”
About UNICEF
UNICEF works in some of the world’s toughest places, to reach the world’s most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

Follow UNICEF on Twitter and Facebook. For more information about COVID-19 and guidance on how to protect children and families, visit www.unicef.org/coronavirus

For further information, please contact:

Christopher Tidey, UNICEF New York, +1 917 340 3017, ctidey@unicef.org