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Report of the Secretary-General on
Strengthening the Management
Capacity of UNRWA

Swiss Statement

presented by
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To the United Nations

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Mr. Chair,

Switzerland thanks the Secretary-General for the Report under consideration today and encourages all delegations to welcome the draft resolution before us. The financial situation of UNRWA is critical and it is high time that we find the means to bridge the existing gap between the tasks mandated and the means provided for their accomplishment. Although the Agency's budget for the last budgetary period has been increased, there is an urgent need to continue increasing both the regular budget and the extrabudgetary contributions. This draft resolution allows us to prepare the ground for this endeavor.

From our point of view the discussion on the financing of UNRWA should not end here, in view of the fact that the structural imbalance between UNRWA's revenues and expenditure has been evident for a number of years. This imbalance has gradually worsened, with no prospect of concrete improvements on the horizon.

In this context we feel it is proper to conduct a thorough discussion with regard to the Agency's finances. We are fully aware of the complex circumstances in which the Report of the Secretary-General has been drafted. Nevertheless, my delegation would have preferred a more strategic approach making reference to the ways in which other UN agencies with a comparable mandate are financed. We would also have liked to see a closer link between the narrative section of the Report – fairly expansive – and its recommendations, which to say the least are laconic.

The ambitious changes which without any doubt are necessary can only be implemented on the basis of a discussion of the financing of UNRWA at a strategic level, making use of clear indicators and with a structured program of expenditures. Any discussion on gradually increasing the Agency's financing will have to take this into consideration, and we encourage the Secretary-General to bear these elements in mind in all future proposals.

Thank you.