### *press release*

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**Majority of refugee children in Armenia enrolled in school one month after fleeing their homes**

*More than 21,000 school-aged children arrived in Armenia following an escalation of hostilities in their communities one month ago, 1 in 3 remain without access to education*

**GENEVA/YEREVAN, Armenia, 24 October 2023** – Two-thirds of refugee children in Armenia are enrolled in national school systems, one month after an escalation of hostilities led to more than 21,000 school-age children fleeing their homes. Efforts must now focus on increasing access for the remaining 1 in 3 children currently not attending school, UNICEF said today.

“Schools are more than places of learning. This is especially true in times of displacement, unrest and uncertainty. Access to education provides refugee children with the structure and support needed to help them overcome their experiences. Schools also provide children with nutrition and mental health services, socialisation and much more to support their health and well-being,” said Christine Weigand, UNICEF Armenia Representative.

“Investment must be made in increasing access to schooling for the 1 in 3 refugee children not enrolled in education and ensuring schools are inclusive for all children.”

Children who arrived in Armenia have not had continuous access to quality education in recent years, making an inclusive school system that provides catch-up classes and tailored support critical.

UNICEF is on the ground working with the Government of Armenia and other partners to help refugee children access the care and support they need. Together with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, UNICEF is undertaking an assessment to identify needs and gaps in the current education system. This includes identifying areas that need bolstering and expansion to support effective inclusion of all refugee children.

UNICEF is providing educational kits including schools-in-a-box and early childhood development kits. In addition, UNICEF and its partners are distributing a first batch of 1,000 schoolbags with stationary for children. Procurement of additional 2,000 schoolbags to address the additional emerging needs is ongoing. UNICEF is also gearing up to expand learning spaces in host schools and preschools across the country.

UNICEF is appealing for US $ 12.6 million to provide critical services including education, health, child protection, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene in the first six months.

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**Notes to editors**

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