Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen, on your election as the President of the Executive Board for 2013. Let me also congratulate the newly elected Vice-Presidents. I would also thank Ambassador John Ashe for his excellent work as President during the last session.

Mr. President,

First, I would like to thank the Executive Director of UNICEF, Mr. Anthony Lake, for his presentation. My delegation would like to touch upon the issues of funding for operational activities and Strategic Partnerships, including cooperation with the World Bank and other international financial institutions.

My delegation welcomes UNICEF’s continuous efforts to mobilize an ever wider range of resources from its partners including private entrepreneurs and civil society organizations. In this regard, Japan appreciates UNICEF’s efforts to increase funding. Last year, we were informed that UNICEF recorded a 13% increase in its annual income in 2010. Although the increase in funding described in this year’s report to the ECOSOC is only 1%, it is a great achievement that the annual income increase has continued despite the global financial crisis. We also appreciate that this increase consists primarily of increases in the core resources from governments and the private sector. Note should be taken of this trend in 2011 as described by the Executive Director, and we commend the efforts made by UNICEF.
The integrated budget was discussed in the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Executive Board which was held last week. My delegation participated in the discussion actively, and the new cost-recovery rate was decided. My delegation hopes that UNICEF will continue to seek transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in its operation in order to deliver the maximum outcome.

Second, the Government of Japan recently submitted its proposal for the regular budget for FY 2013 to the Diet. As part of this budget, my Government is requesting 22.7 million USD for UNICEF. Under severe financial circumstances, we are maintaining a similar level of contributions in USD to UNICEF compared to FY2012. This is because UNICEF remains an important partner in delivering support to children in need. I should at the same time point out that such a request also entails our growing expectation of UNICEF to be even more efficient and accountable in its work.

Mr. President,

There is not much time left for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We recognize that reducing child mortality (MDG4) is progressing but not fast enough. We should continue to save the lives of as many children as we can. Japan has long regarded matters of child protection and empowerment, including health-related concerns, as global issues directly connected to Human Security. In accordance with this view, the Government of Japan announced that it would allocate USD 5 billion over five years starting from 2011 to address global health including maternal and child health. We have steadily implemented this assistance and shall continue to do so, while continuing to build upon the close relationships we have with relevant organizations including UNICEF.

Not only has the Government of Japan contributed to accelerating the achievement of the MDGs, but it is also leading discussions concerning international development goals beyond 2015. With regard to the shape of the post-2015 global development agenda, Japan has been actively contributing to setting the agenda through such means as the ‘Contact Group’ since 2011. With regard to the new framework, my delegation believes that equity and inclusiveness, universal health coverage, quality education, sustainability, resilience to natural disaster, economic growth and job creation are major challenges. Human Security greatly contributes to our efforts to tackle these challenges by strengthening protection and empowerment of people, in particular vulnerable individuals including children. Guided by the principle of Human Security, we would like to contribute substantially to the discussions on the post-2015 agenda.
Mr. President,

Finally, the Government of Japan will hold the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) in Japan from 1 to 3 June 2013. TICAD is a conference that brings together leaders of various stakeholders from around the world, including African countries, donor countries, international and regional organizations, and civil society organizations. We hope that TICAD V will contribute to the development of African countries in cooperation with all the participants. In particular, we will accelerate our efforts toward achieving MDGs as well as contribute to establishing the post-2015 development agenda through the TICAD process. In this regard, the Government of Japan will continue to work closely with UNICEF to address health related issues including reducing child mortality in African countries.

Thank you.