At the outset, allow me to congratulate our Nordic neighbor Finland and especially Ambassador Viinanen on being elected as the President of the Bureau and for his encouraging opening statement. I would also like to welcome the new members of the Bureau and Executive Board.

Mr. President, Mr. Executive Director, distinguished delegates,

I would like to thank the Executive Director Mr. Anthony Lake for the comprehensive and detailed overview of UNICEF activities in 2011-2012 and welcome the effective use of available resources to implement the operational activities and the progress made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. We are also thankful for the comments by Dr Jim Yong Kim about the effective cooperation between UNICEF and World Bank, during morning session. We strongly support such partnerships.

Estonia – one of the pioneers in implementing paperless electronic government sessions, for more than 10 years by now, is welcoming the continued commitment of UNICEF for PaperSmart Executive Board sessions. It has not only saved resources, but also made work more effective and contributes to the green thinking in development.

A year ago we gave our full support to the innovative vision of the future. We are glad to witness a successful increase in efficiency and effectiveness in use of resources and in simplification and harmonization of business practices with other United Nations agencies to implement the
common programmes. It has proved to be successful and should be as a lead pattern to all agencies how to save costs on management and operations. We also look forward to the operationalization of QCPR.

The Estonian government has contributed to UNICEF' resources for 15 years and will continue to do so with significant increase in our core contribution for this year. As a small country with success story in using wide range of innovative solutions in our everyday life, we entirely support UNICEF's vision to use innovative solutions and partnerships to scale up its activities to support the most disadvantaged, to increase the quality of education, improve the efficiency of humanitarian actions. We would like to see stronger emphasis on linking humanitarian actions and development programmes, with further focus on preparedness and resilience. We highly welcome UNICEF initiative for South-South cooperation which has proved to be very effective in different regions in Asia and Africa, especially in sharing innovative experiences.

Estonia also wants to commend the contributions made to the independent evaluation on Delivering as One, as well as the effort to develop a set of standard operating procedures. This is very important in order to deliver results coherently, efficiently and cost-effectively. Estonia shares the view of UNICEF and believes it its crucial to follow up on the findings of the evaluation in order to strengthen Delivering as One and UN operations at country level.

Mr. President,

*Rights of children* is one of Estonian human rights priorities. Child protection concerns arise in all parts of the world, in situations of crisis and stability – allow me to note that Estonia values highly the child protection and awareness raising work UNICEF is doing, often SO in conflict situations. Last time we discussed the thematic focus of child protection was in 2011, we are looking forward to further discussions on this topic.

We also highly appreciate UNICEF's focus on gender and that gender equality has been placed at the centre of ongoing efforts to achieve results for all children, including the most vulnerable and marginalized. We would like to ensure that gender concerns are addressed adequately in all programmes and we encourage continuing partnerships with other agencies and organizations in
the area of gender equality, especially with UN-Women and UNFPA. We continue to support UNICEF's activities in providing emergency education, responding to gender based violence and providing services for women and girls seeking assistance in conflict affected areas. Estonia also welcomes further strengthening of the Human Rights-based Approach in UNICEF's programmes.

Thank you!