Statement by Norway on behalf Belgium, Canada, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland

Item 9 Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

Mr President,

I’m pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland and my own country, Norway.

Let me start by thanking the representative of the Board of Auditors as well as the Management for their explanations provided today.

My delegation would like to express our appreciation for the unqualified audit opinion issued for all the three Organizations for the biennium 2010-2011, for the reduction in the number of audit recommendations as well as for the progress made in the implementation of recommendations issued by the Board of Auditors for previous periods.

We commend the Organizations for the improvements made in their financial management, particularly regarding the implementation of IPSAS and the clean-up of long outstanding account balances.

However, we emphasize that there still seems to be a need for additional efforts to ensure compliance with the regulations for procurement and asset and inventory management. Continued attention must be paid to the internal control and oversight of the country offices.

We encourage UNDP, in cooperation with UNFPA and the other members of the UNDG, to renew their commitment and take actions to ensure that the common guidelines for the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers be used systematically, including to revise the guidelines if need be.

With regard to UNDP, we underscore the need to take necessary steps to improve project management at country level. We appreciate the marked decrease in the number of cases of fraud. However, the net loss involved seems to remain at the same level as in the previous biennium. This indicates that there
is still a need to continue to strengthen the internal control in UNDP. We would welcome a more detailed account of this effort as well as further information on how the fraud cases have been followed up in the Annual Report of the Internal Auditor for 2012.

Turning to UNFPA, we find that the report of the Board of Auditors confirms that UNFPA has made a commendable effort to improve the weaknesses previously identified with regard to the cooperation with national partners.

We appreciate that also for UNFPA the number of cases of fraud has decreased sharply, which we assume to be the consequence of more strict internal control. We would welcome more information on how the fraud cases have been followed up in the Annual Report of the Internal Auditor for 2012.

Lastly, Mr. President, we encourage UNFPA to intensify its effort to fill vacancies more swiftly and to ensure a more efficient recruitment process.

Thank you.