Mr Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro* and Serbia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States are firmly committed to sustainable development. We have taken an active role during the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development and in the implementation of the commitments entered into by Heads of State and Government. The EU and its Member States will be fully engaged in the various discussions including on sustainable development goals, the High Level Political Forum, and the financing mobilization strategy for sustainable development, as well as for the 2014 UN conference on Small Island Developing States.

In this regard, we welcome the Outcome Document of the September Special Event to follow-up efforts made towards achieving the MDGs. It represents a key step forward and a good balance between positions expressed over months of consultations. We welcome the fact that it captures in a concise manner key messages, both on the final push towards the MDGs in the run up to 2015, and on charting the way forward towards elaborating the post-2015 development agenda.

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* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
We appreciate that key elements have been agreed and are included in the final text, notably the need for a coherent approach that integrates in a balanced manner the three dimensions of sustainable development, working towards a single universal framework and set of goals, and the reference to peace and security, gender equality, human rights, the rule of law and democratic governance.

The world has changed over the last decades, including the nature and magnitude of our global challenges, their cause and effects, and our respective capabilities to address them. The post-2015 development agenda should recognize such evolving dynamics. We are committed to addressing these evolving realities and responsibilities, and acknowledge the particular situation and concerns of the most vulnerable countries. We will all need to play our part to support countries most lagging behind.

We welcome the successful first meeting of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). The EU played an active role in its establishment and will support the work of the HLPF to provide political leadership, enhance integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, and to robustly review progress in the implementation of commitments.

We welcome the establishment of the United Nations Environment Assembly that positions UNEP to act as the global voice for the environment within the UN system. This new structure provides for a strengthened role for Ministers to participate in decision-making, as well as providing opportunities for meaningful involvement by stakeholders to participate in UNEP’s work.

We also welcome the recently agreed ECOSOC reform package and the decision that the HLPF will meet under the auspices of both the General Assembly and the ECOSOC. This puts sustainable development at the centre of a better coordinated UN system. This enhanced coherence and effectiveness within the UN is a reflection of the broader coherence we should seek in all our cooperative efforts and initiatives.

In the same vein we attach the highest priority to ensure policy coherence, not only between the follow up to Rio+20, the post-2015 development agenda, and the Financing for Development process, but also with many other associated processes, such as those relating to democracy, rule of law, human rights, peace and security, gender equality, empowerment of women, population and development and climate change.

Mr. Chairman,

Climate change will be an important topic in our discussions in the months ahead, being a central challenge for sustainable development and poverty eradication. All economies are together in the fight against climate change. Our common challenge is to put our economies on the path to low-emission and climate resilient development, and to use climate action as a catalyst for sustainable development.
This year in Warsaw, we must continue to make progress on what was agreed in Cancun, Durban and Doha and pave the way for adopting in 2015 a single, global and comprehensive legally-binding agreement applicable to all parties to come into effect in 2020. We will also need to make concrete progress on closing "the mitigation ambition gap" in the pre-2020 period if we are to stay on track to limit the increase in global temperature to less than 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

The other 2 Rio conventions on biological diversity and on desertification, land degradation and drought will also be discussed in the coming weeks. We are looking forward to constructive discussions on those key interlinked issues, and to further streamline and update the relevant resolutions so as to reflect the agreements of the last Conferences of the Parties.

Disaster risk reduction is more than ever crucial to ensure sustainable development and address its various interlinked challenges, especially since risks are growing faster than our capacities to manage them. The EU and its Member States are looking forward to discussing ISDR and resilience in preparations for the Hyogo conference in 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

The EU and its Member States welcome the convening of the 3rd UN conference on Small Island Developing States, and the theme proposed for the conference on “sustainable development of small island states through genuine and durable partnerships”. We also welcome the proposals for a focused, effective and action oriented conference, concentrating on partnerships at different levels, that are anchored on national ownership, based upon mutual trust, equity, respect and mutual accountability, and engages the private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders. For that purpose, we would like to see an equally focused, effective and action oriented preparatory process, and are looking forward to contributing constructively to the negotiations of the upcoming modalities resolution.

As President Barroso noted at the recent High Level Breakfast preparing for the SIDS conference last September: “we see the EU and the small islands nations as natural, equal partners on critical global issues, which by definition defy borders, and on many of which we already see eye to eye”.

Mr. Chairman,

The Member States of the European Union are this year tabling tri-annual draft resolution entitled “Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea”. The draft resolution is a follow-up on the previous UNGA resolution 65/149 on the same themes which was adopted by consensus in December 2010. It builds on the subsequent SG report that reflects the views of various states and organizations on the issue, including on possible modalities of international cooperation. We
look forward to working with all delegations on this draft and invite all interested Member States to cosponsor the resolution.

Mr. Chairman,

Although we cannot address all the issues that agenda item 19 on sustainable development will cover this year, we would like however to briefly elaborate on UN-Habitat and urban development, which is formally under agenda item 20. Continuing and rapid urbanization makes it inevitable that sustainable development cannot be achieved without the efforts of cities, and in cooperation with cities, and without a holistic approach to urban development, that promotes economically prosperous, safe and socially inclusive, as well as environmentally sustainable cities.

In accordance with last year's GA resolution, we are looking forward to discussing in UNGA 69 some remaining modalities for the preparation of the UN conference on housing and sustainable urban development agenda in 2016 in the most inclusive and effective manner. We trust we can focus this year's discussions on the challenges of the implementation of the Habitat agenda, building on the outcomes of the recent UN Habitat Governing Council, and in preparation for 2016.

Lastly, Mr Chairman,

We do not underestimate the challenges in discussing these issues in the weeks ahead. We hope that we will continue on the path of improving our working methods and further advance our efforts to ensure relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of our Committee. We have made concrete proposals in this regard and look forward to continuing this discussion with the aim of adopting a consensual decision of the second committee under the agenda item devoted to the revitalization of the work of the GA.

We look forward to fruitful and constructive exchanges on all sustainable development matters.

I thank you.