"Mr. President,

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and my own country Finland.

We thank UNDP for all the hard work that has been put into preparing the Administrator’s report and the Gender Equality Strategy for 2014-2017. These documents are of great importance guiding UNDP’s work towards achieving greater gender equality, at all levels of UNDP’s work.

We are pleased to note that the linkages between the UNDP Strategic Plan and the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy for 2014 -2017 are strong. A results-based approach is vital, and progress must be measured in relation to both the development outcomes of the strategic plan and the organizational efficiency and effectiveness. The strategic entry points under the outcomes in the Strategy are ambitious, and we would like to give UNDP our full support towards strengthening its work. Setting the bar high brings us to the questions of implementation, and we would wish to see more concrete ways for reaching those objectives. The results framework should include a set of indicators that allows for aggregate assessment of to what extent UNDP succeeds with its ambitious approach to gender-mainstreaming. Since gender equality now is fully integrated in UNDP’s programmes, we recommend that reporting on the implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy should be included in the Administrator’s Annual Report on Performance and Results. Also, we look forward to an independent evaluation towards the end of the strategy cycle.

We underline the importance of the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP) as a mechanism for system-wide accountability, and providing standard requirements for mainstreaming gender equality. Furthermore, the work towards achieving gender equality means operationalizing the decisions of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). We welcome the efforts of the UNDP in improving its compliance with SWAP, and because further steps are needed, we look forward to future reporting in achieving these requirements. UNDP has a key role in this cooperation, with its wide country office network and close contacts with governments. This aspect could be further stressed in the strategy. UNDP’s role is critical for facilitating other UN organisations’ work in achieving their goals. In this regard, we stress the importance of strengthened partnerships between UNDP and relevant actors outside of the UN system, such as the multilateral development banks.

Especially, UNDP’s success in promoting gender equality will partly be looked at against its performance as a partner to UN Women. We were pleased to note that attention had been paid to promoting this
partnership, and are of the opinion that it could have a stronger emphasis in the Strategy. To ensure maximum results and minimum overlap in the work of these two and other UN organizations, all of which have a very important role to play in enhancing gender equality, clear division of labor and close cooperation and coordination are required. Providing UN Women with good administrative services and collaboration benefits also UNDP and will facilitate UNDP achieving the gender results of its own.

Mr. President,

We would like to emphasize the importance of allocating sufficient resources to proper implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy. We are pleased to note the 15 per cent allocation of the organization’s resources towards gender equality and women’s empowerment, including at least 15 per cent of funding also in peacebuilding context.

Concerning the launch of a Trust Fund for Gender Equality, we need to consider the matter against the wider backdrop of UNDP funding structure, and decreased core funding, its alignment with the outcomes of the UNDP strategic plan and relation to the 15% resource target mentioned earlier. Setting up a separate Trust Fund goes against the idea of mainstreaming gender equality, may lead to further fragmentation of UNDP funding and increase in the number of Trust Funds to be administered. The Gender Equality Action Plan states that priority would be given to funding UN joint programmes on gender equality and women’s empowerment. However, should the Trust Fund fall short of its fund raising goal, how would this important work be funded? Therefore, in any case, we encourage the UNDP to strengthen monitoring of gender related expenditure to ensure that sufficient resources from core and ear-marked resources are allocated to gender equality.

Regarding the Gender Steering and Implementation Committee (GSIC), we consider it to function well as the UNDP gender equality oversight mechanism. We are pleased to see continued commitment by the UNDP’s highest management in its work and in the implementation of gender equality goals in the organization in general. We support the fact that UNDP further refines its gender marker and that gender equality seal will be rolled out.

The strategy puts a strong emphasis on women, which is positive. However, it would benefit from including adolescent girls and boys in a more consistent manner, as well as including references to “men” where appropriate.

UNDP rightly notes that in order to reach its full potential and to be a credible actor in the area of gender equality, it is crucial that adequate attention is paid on gender parity within UNDP to close the gender gap at the middle, senior and director levels with women accounting for less than 40 per cent of staff. We look forward to the implementation of the UNDP Gender Parity Strategy, as well as learning about the progress made.

Finally, we support UNDP plans to further strengthen its gender equality capacity at the country office level, when it comes to senior gender advisers. Emphasis is also put to the regional level in this regard, while the headquarters’ Gender Team continues as the anchor of the architecture. More flexible teams
in UNDP’s gender work sound interesting, and we would also like to hear more details on how this is envisaged in practice. In strengthening UNDP capacity, incentive and accountability structures for gender mainstreaming should be in place. In particular, this should be an important part of performance assessment of senior managers in order to ensure implementation of gender mainstreaming.

In conclusion, I would like to express once again our full support to the work of UNDP and its continuous efforts to work to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Thank you."