Thank you, Mr. President. On behalf of the United States, let me express our sincere thanks to Executive Director Osotimehin for his statement and to the entire UNFPA team for their great work, as always.

As we noted yesterday, 2014 is an important year for the UN development system in multiple respects, including the first year of new strategic alignment between UN agencies and intensified efforts at acceleration of the Millennium Development Goals alongside work to elaborate a post-2015 development agenda. UNFPA has been a leader on population issues for decades and we count on your continued leadership in the months ahead.

Let me use this opportunity to flag a few particular priorities.

First, we are grateful for UNFPA's leadership on the ICPD agenda. We have seen the important outcomes of the various regional meetings on "ICPD Beyond 2014." We look forward to the Secretary-General's forthcoming report which can provide powerful further impetus for galvanizing renewed commitment to the ICPD agenda.

Second, we value tremendously the work of UNFPA, together with all its partners, to increase access to reproductive health services worldwide. We are working hard to meet our shared commitment to the Family Planning 2020 goal of enabling an additional 120 million girls and women in the world's poorest countries to access and use voluntary family planning.

We want to express particular appreciation for UNFPA's emphasis on adolescence. Over seven million adolescent girls give birth each year,
nearly ten percent die annually from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth, and nearly 90 percent of are victims of an early or forced child marriage. It is imperative that young people, particularly the most marginalized, have access to sexual and reproductive health services and education. Given these realities, UNFPA’s work is vital to help young people gain access to and use family planning, comprehensive sexuality education, and prevention services for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

We would also underscore with appreciation, UNFPA’s work on capacity building around data. While empirical evidence alone is not the sole factor for success, it provides an essential ingredient. We therefore welcome the plan to assess UNFPA’s support to national capacity-building to generate, analyze, disseminate and utilize data related to population dynamics, reproductive health, youth and gender equality with a view to relevance, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Turning to management issues, we welcome UNFPA’s vision outlined in the transitional evaluation plan. As active and engaged supporters of UN evaluations generally, we are glad to see the Evaluation Office strengthened and its independence reinforced, in line with the evaluation policy. We welcome the new director and assure her, along with UNFPA leadership overall, of our firm support. We further welcome the office’s prioritization of themes needing the most attention in the future—youth and adolescents, access to family planning, and the ability to make informed policy decisions.

Let me also express appreciation for UNFPA’s concerted efforts over the last year to address Member State concerns regarding the Global and Regional Program (GRP) and welcome the informal being held later today on the successor program GRI.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to conclude by expressing my government’s sincerest appreciation for Dr. Osotimehin’s stewardship in advancing UNFPA's mandate on reproductive health and rights,
particularly for those most in need. The United States pledges to continue working collaboratively with UNFPA’s leadership, our fellow Executive Board members, other governments, civil society, and the private sector on these critical life-saving issues.