Mr. President,
Executive Director,
Members of the Board,
Good morning/afternoon.

I would like to thank the Executive Director for his comprehensive and learned statement. Israel commends the ED for his leadership, commitment and dedication. We know how difficult this task is and we appreciate the way in which he navigates through troubled waters, always with sense, sensitivity and sensibility.

Mr. President,

2014 is a year of great opportunities. UNFPA has started to implement the strategic plan which makes UNFPA a stronger and more effective organisation. We are confident that this will soon bring better results for women, youth and adolescents on the ground. 2014 is a year of great opportunities also because of the intergovernmental process we are all involved in – shaping the post 2015 agenda and the ICPD + 20. The outcome of these processes will provide the context and set the political climate for UNFPA work in the future.

The ICPD’s Programme of Action, adopted in Cairo in 1994, was indeed a ground-breaking document. It’s universal adoption fundamentally – and we assert, irreversibly – shifted the issue of sexual and reproductive health from a public health concern to a human rights concern.
Moreover, it formally recognized that reproductive health and rights, women's empowerment and gender equality should form the basis of population and development programmes.

20 years after this momentous occasion we are reflecting on what has been achieved. It is clear from the ICPD review that we have made huge progress but a lot of challenges still lie ahead. A lot more needs to be done to address the needs of women, girls, youth and adolescents to bring dignity and hope to every human being.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the ICPD secretariat and especially KwabenaDanquafor leading this complex system-wide effort. You have all been doing a great job.

Mr. President
Looking to the horizon - the opportunities before us are great, but so too are the sobering challenges. The ICPD agenda needs renewed political support and positive momentum, to deliver on the promise.

This is the time to form new alliances, to think creatively, to come together around common interests. It is our mandate, our responsibility, our task – member states, not only the UNFPA. It is under our watch and we must deliver.

Israel will continue to be a passionate supporter of the ICPD agenda and pledge to work tirelessly with all stakeholders - Member states, civil society to ensure that we don’t go backwards but indeed move forward.

Mr. President,

Later on today the executive board will discuss the biennial transitional evaluation budget. A key element for UNFPA's effective delivery is indeed it's ability to learn from it's own experience. Independent and effective
evaluation in UNFPA is also important to cultivate stakeholder's trust in the work the organisation is doing.

It is clear to us that UNFPA is on the right track and is taking the right steps to put in place a fully functioning, adequately funded and independent evaluation office.

Allow me to offer a warm welcome from Israel to the new head of evolution, Andrea, and assure her of Israel's full support and cooperation.

Mr. President,

Winston Churchill once said, “The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty”. Let me be optimistic and see the opportunities we have ahead of us.

Thank you