Mr. President,

Finland would like to thank UNDP for preparing the medium-term programme of work of the Evaluation Office for 2014-17. We agree with UNDP that prior to the independent review of the Evaluation Office, the work programme should indeed be regarded as a flexible framework so that the review recommendations can be taken fully onboard later.

We fully support UNDP efforts towards developing the evaluation function further. In this regard, we commend UNDP on establishment of the Evaluation Advisory Panel and continuing to keep engaged to support the work of the Evaluation Office.

Concerning the 2012 peer review results and the subsequent initiative to strengthen UNDP’s capacity to evaluate impact, we are pleased by UNDP’s firm commitment to have the evaluation of impact fully embedded in the organisation’s evaluation culture.

The Programme of Work mentions the possibility of preparing joint reports with the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations. However, we would like to stress that the risks and benefits of combining reporting should be very carefully weighed, as the distinctions between evaluation and inspection must be clear-cut.

Turning to thematic evaluations, we are pleased that they are aligned with the key outcomes of the strategic plan. We fully support the plan to evaluate the UNDP contribution to gender equality, and would like to underline the importance of integrating human rights and gender equality in all evaluations, in line with the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) guidance. In addition, we find that the plan to select one thematic evaluation to cover an institutional effectiveness theme of the strategic plan is pertinent and sets an example for other agencies to follow.

Finally, we would like to express our strong support for UNDP taking a role in developing national evaluation capacities. We would be interested to hear whether there is a plan to evaluate these activities – together with other UN institutions contributing to evaluation capacity development? Finland encourages strong coordination and close cooperation between these initiatives, in particular with the EvalPartners initiative, to increase strategic synergies, as well as to avoid overlaps.

Thank you, Mr. President.