Mr. President,
Let me congratulate you and the other Members of the Bureau for your election.

We would like to thank the Administrator both for the report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy in 2013 and for the UNDP gender equality strategy 2014 -2017.

Italy considers Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment key for addressing the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and for accelerating global sustainable development beyond 2015.

The coming two years before the 2015 MDGs deadline, with key events such as the 58th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in March 2014, the Beyond 2014 ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development) and the 2015 Beijing+20 review, present an opportunity to review lessons learned and to build on best practices.

In this context UNDP has a very critical role to play both as chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and as coordinator of the United Nations system in the field. We appreciate the results achieved by UNDP in promoting gender equality in the four focus areas of the strategic plan. We welcome the “Gender equality strategy 2014-2017” and we are pleased with the structure and framework of the strategy and the efforts made by UNDP to align it with the QCPR.

The strategy can have a significant role in shaping the above mentioned processes and in supporting the definition of a Post 2015 Agenda which addresses inequalities and promotes transformative changes to empower women and girls in all their diversity. Women must become catalytic agents of change and equal partners with men in the quest to promote a growth that is inclusive, just, equitable and sustainable.
The broad mandate of UNDP and its presence in more than 170 countries, gives to the organization comparative advantages which must be strategically utilized for achieving gender equality. In this context the mission, approach and outputs proposed in the strategy must be considered as relevant elements of a complex “transitional” phase which should build on the current MDG goals to take a holistic approach to gender inequalities.

UNDP has indeed an important role to play in support of the UN system and of national governments to address gender inequalities and to reshape policies in the economic, social and political spheres. In this context promotion of Democratic governance, support to sustainable development and resilience building are undoubtedly areas where UNDP has a comparative advantage.

We appreciate the fact that the gender equality strategy is based on the results achieved and builds upon the institutional accountability and reporting mechanisms. In this context the Gender Marker, launched in 2009, is key to track planning and performance monitoring processes. We welcome the development of the gender marker guidance note co-lead by UNDP and UNICEF for the development of a coherent and effective approach within the UN system.

We also appreciate the commitment of UNDP to address gender parity for staff at all levels.

Mr. President,

UNDP’s work for gender equality must be linked to that of other UN agencies establishing close coordination in particular with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and UN-Women. In this context particular attention should be given in integrating UNDP work with the new strategy launched by UN Women for the “transformative standalone goal” in the post 2015 Agenda; particular attention should also be given to coordination at regional at country level.

Mr President,

Italy believes that the promotion of “women’s agency and voices” is as a key element for transforming gender relationships in the public and private arena to produce societal changes conducive to gender equality. In this context we highly value UNDP work in support of multilevel actions, from the local level to the national and international context, promoting women’s agency with the objective of expanding choices and capabilities of women as key stakeholders for a fair and equitable development.