Madam President, Executive Director, ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you Executive Director, Madam Phumzile, for your comprehensive statement and report. We congratulate Ms Anita Bhatia for her nomination as Deputy Executive Director designate for Resource Management, Sustainability and Partnerships, thank you both for your visit to Finland earlier this year.

We commend UN-Women for its achievements last year. For example, in the outcome area on Women, peace and security, humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction, all the 2018 milestones were either reached or surpassed. In addition to the highest programme delivery, UN Women reached also its highest level of income.

In today's world where we need to “push back against pushbacks”, and the milestone year of gender equality 2020 fast approaching, we need a strong UN Women that stands up for the equal rights of everyone to fulfil their full potential, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation. This includes sexual and reproductive health and rights, a crucial component in order to achieve true gender equality and the Agenda 2030.

For strengthening the UN Women further, we want to highlight the issues related to the well-being of the staff. As illustrated by the
MOPAN assessment, the staff of UN Women works hard and it is very dedicated. However, the large mandate of the organization, and the imbalance between expectations and what can be delivered, sometimes pose a challenge. We expect UN Women to continue tackling these issues, as well as to be a champion in culture of respect, zero tolerance and accountability for discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of power.

As the persisting funding gap is concerned, we encourage UN Women to continue engaging both traditional and new partners in the structural financial dialogues and to diversify its funding sources, including through innovative funding and individual giving through National Committees. The steps taken in communications and advocacy, including the first Core Resources Result Report, are very much welcomed and will help in this endeavor.

Madam President,

It is recognized that women and girls with disabilities are exposed to multiple barriers in exercising of their rights. We encourage UN Women to continue enhancing programming for specific groups of women at risk of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and allocation of sufficient resources to this end, to develop disaggregated data collection, to engage in cooperation with other UN Agencies, and to continue to work towards the system wide accountability for disability inclusion at the UN.

Madam President,

We appreciate UN Women’s clear commitment to the reform process of the UN Development System. We are pleased that the
implementation has started at the country level, though at different rates at this early stage. We wish to emphasize that gender equality and human rights must both be included as goals, as well as fully mainstreamed throughout the whole reform process, including UNSDCF Guidelines and system-wide strategic document. We continue also to underline the **system-wide coordination role of UN Women in gender equality.**

Madam President,

The risks associated with **climate change** reinforce gender inequalities and pose a threat to the enjoyment of human rights by women and girls. At the same time, however, women have tremendous potential as agents of change towards a more sustainable future. We encourage UN Women to pay more attention to this area of crucial importance, and to mainstream climate change in its activities.

To conclude, let me mention that our **brand new coalition government** has put climate change and gender equality very much to the center of their program. 11 out of 19 cabinet ministers are women. In the parliament almost half [47 %] of the MPs are women.

This provides us with an excellent ground to continue our fruitful cooperation and strong partnership with UN-Women.

Thank you for your attention.