Statement by Deputy Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the UN-Women Annual Session (18 June 2019)

Mm. President,

At the beginning, I would like to thank Mm. Executive Director (Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka) for her substantive report under this agenda item. We acknowledge with appreciation the UN-Women’s achievements during the first year of implementing its 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. Despite encouraging successes, advancement of women and girls requires even further acceleration. It is a global issue in need of attention by all countries regardless of their level of economic development.

I avail this opportunity to highlight only a few of the achievements at national level since last annual session of the UN-Women.

On February 2019, the Government approved an executive act on the Sixth National Development Plan, according to which monitoring mechanisms shall be developed and indexes shall be put in place to constantly evaluate performance of Ministries and other public agencies on advancement of women while they implement the Plan.

As a result of intensified efforts to enhance managerial skills and executive expertise of female employees, the number of female executives at all levels has recorded an increase from 14.9 percent in 2017 to 18.3 percent in 2018. By the end of the Sixth National Development Plan, i.e. 2021, at least 30 percent of all managerial positions should be occupied by women.

On May 2019, lengthy deliberations in the Parliament resulted in revisiting the provisions of the Civil Rights Law of Iran. A bill was voted and passed by a landslide, according to which thousands of children born
to Iranian mothers, either abroad or inside the country, will receive Iranian citizenship. Considering the fact that Iran has traditionally been among major host countries of large number of legal and illegal refugees, and bearing in mind other sensitivities around nationality law, adoption of the bill should be viewed as a major breakthrough to protect the women's rights.

Iranian women have also become integral players of the national campaign to thwart and defuse the impacts of the illegal and inhumane sanctions that are targeting our citizens. The role of women entrepreneurs and the female-headed knowledge-based companies to bypass and defeat sanctions has been outstanding. Nevertheless, the disproportionate impact of sanctions on women and girls’ wellbeing cannot be downplayed.

It is highly alarming that unilateral sanctions continue to be imposed and augmented on developing countries, including mine, with direct impact on women related policies and budgeting. Women and girl’s access to basic healthcare services and medicine and their right to food and food security are particularly targeted through imposition of such indiscriminate illegal measures. Collective punishment of civilians in particular women, children and other vulnerable populations is reprehensible and is against international law including international humanitarian and human rights law.

I thank you Mm. President.