Thank you Madame President, Madame Executive Director, members of the Board.

I am delivering this statement on behalf of Belgium, Georgia, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg and the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and my own country, the United Kingdom.

Madame Executive Director, as we approach the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, the 20th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and the 10th anniversary of UN Women, there has never been a more critical time to work for the protection and advancement of global standards and gender norms to ensure women and girls globally can meet and fulfil their true potential. It is the responsibility of us all to defend women's rights, but now is the time for UN Women to demonstrate true leadership across the UN to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. It is UN Women's mandate to lead and coordinate the UN and wider development system in this direction, and as your core supporters, we look to you to tell us how we can best support you in the significant milestones of 2020.

We welcome Anita Bhatia in her new role as Deputy Executive Director for Resource Management, Sustainability and Partnerships and look forward to working with her to achieve a sustainable future for women and girls.

Madame President, I would like to focus on a few specific points:

One of the most unique and valuable contributions to the system is UN Women's focus on the normative and coordination aspects of their tripartite mandate to ensure gender equality and empowerment is at the forefront of UN Development Reform. As a core agency of the Funds and Programmes, we encourage UN Women to use the Common Chapter and SWAP 2 as key tools to guide coordination of other agencies. Similarly, we look forward to seeing you continue to support
the new Resident Coordinator system and integrate your current systems and processes into reform-related strategies.

In this regard, the country typology review and change management process offers a timely opportunity to ensure UN Women's work responds to both the repositioning of the development system and enhances its offer to the UN system. UN Women should take an open, consultative and collaborative approach with other UN agencies and member states in the planning and development of these processes.

Furthermore, UN Women is strategically placed to take ownership of its added value and comparative advantage, in developing and leveraging effective partnerships at the regional and country level with other UN agencies and gender actors to ensure streamlined efforts for gender equality. This is particularly essential in humanitarian efforts where UN Women’s role is best served working through others.

**Committed to gender equality and women’s empowerment,** we welcome the progress UN Women has made in organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and the commitment shown on transparency - UN Women's new sixth place positioning on the International Aid and Transparency Initiative demonstrates a true determination to improve and enhance its efforts on accountability and effectiveness. However, we hope UN Women will work to implement recommendations from MOPAN's 2017-18 assessment highlighting a need for greater transparency on resource allocation at the country level.

Let me conclude by welcoming the progress UN Women has made delivering against the first year of the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan. We ask UN Women to address the lessons learned thus far, and look forward to reviewing these outcomes at the midterm review.

Madame President, Madame Executive Director, thank you.