SECOND REGULAR SESSION 2019
Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

Joint Statement on the Implementation of decision and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Chair,

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Ireland, Iceland, Japan, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and my own country of the United Kingdom. We welcome the report on the implementation of decision and recommendation of the Programme Coordinating Board – the PCB – of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

As we know from the 2019 Global Aids update, the "global response to HIV is at a precarious point". and there are continuing high levels of new infections in young women; half of all new HIV infections are in key populations and their partners, and the continuing inequalities and other social factors that undermine efforts to address the disease.

We therefore rely on an effective, efficient and accountable Joint Programme to deliver the 2020 Targets, and the 2030 Agenda. This requires exceptional leadership.

We welcome the appointment of Ms Winnie Byanyima as the new Executive Director of UNAIDS and we look forward to working with Ms Byanyima and her team, and thank UNFPA and UNDP for their active participation in the search committee.

This has been a difficult year for UNAIDS and we are grateful for the work of Ms Carlsson and the wider team in keeping the focus on the epidemic and pushing forward with the Management Action Plan (MAP). We believe that the MAP, if fully implemented with strong leadership from the new Executive Director, will provide a solid basis for addressing the issues of harassment, including sexual harassment, bullying and abuse of power within the organisation.

We welcome the feedback provided through UNDP and UNFPA’s report on the implementation of the Joint Programme Action plan and on the transformative results across their respective Strategic results areas.
We welcome the contribution made by both agencies to these key areas, noting that the importance of prevention and engagement with adolescent girls, young women, men and boys as areas of particular importance. We also appreciate the work of UNDP and UNFPA in addressing stigma, violence and discrimination towards people living with HIV, many of whom still face immense barriers in accessing quality prevention, treatment and services. We also emphasize UNDP and UNFPA’s important role in fighting against harmful masculinity norms and bringing about positive behavioural and cultural change.

We welcome the focus in the report on HIV and health service integration and are particularly encouraged by the work of UNFPA in creating awareness and commitment to increasing utilisation of integrated sexual reproductive health and rights services.

We agree that ensuring young women are able to access a broad range of effective contraceptive methods along with the tools to protect themselves from HIV are critical to realising their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

We are also encouraged by the discussion at the recent June PCB on strengthening and integrating comprehensive HIV responses into sustainable health systems for universal health coverage. This will require us to change the ways we currently work, and to strive for even stronger coordination and collaboration with others. We look forward to the upcoming HLM on UHC and to continued work with our colleagues on this Board, as well as the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board.

Thank you.