Statement by

Ms. Inese Freimane-Deksne
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Latvia

at

the annual session of 2014 of UN-Women Executive Board

17 June 2014
Mr. President,

Last year was both the most challenging and the most successful year for UN-Women. Challenging – because the Entity’s leadership changed and it had to establish itself within the new regional structure, continuing to match high expectations within limited resources. Successful – because it has achieved very positive results across all aspects of the Entity’s mandate, successfully combining its normative, operational and coordination roles. We welcome the first consolidated report of UN-Women on the implementation of its Strategic plan and on operational activities presented to this session. The prioritization of the alignment of UN-Women’s activities with the General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations (QCPR) has significantly improved the impact on the ground and promoted better coordination on gender equality and women’s empowerment in the UN system.

On behalf of Latvia, I would like to sincerely congratulate the leadership of UN-Women and the whole team for those achievements. A special appreciation is due to the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka who assumed her duties only in the second half of the year and provided a strong and clear guidance for UN-Women’s work ever since.

Mr. President,

Let me now turn to the specific areas of UN-Women’s work reflected in the report.

With the support and expertise from UN-Women, important advances were made in the global normative framework on gender equality and the empowerment of women. The 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women strengthened governmental commitments for the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls; preparations were stepped up for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; overwhelming support in the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was gathered around a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women, together
with the integration of gender perspective into other goals, as well as the Security Council adopted a landmark resolution 2122 (2013) calling for stronger women’s leadership and participation in peace and security processes. Next year we will have two remarkable events - the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the adoption of the new post-2015 development agenda – that should further strengthen the normative framework on gender equality, women’s empowerment and the human rights of women. It is our common responsibility to justify the expectations of women and girls around the globe.

On programme results, we congratulate UN-Women on the highest programme delivery achieved since the Entity’s establishment. This was made possible through effective establishment of new structures and ways of working, decentralization, increased capacity in the field, as well as better convergence between the Entity’s normative, operational and coordination roles. Latvia particularly welcomes the results achieved in ending violence against women, promoting women’s economic empowerment and women’s leadership and participation. Launching the knowledge gateway for women’s economic empowerment, strengthening partnership with the private sector and launching Private Sector Leadership Advisory Council will accelerate economic and social progress for women and girls worldwide by combining the efforts of governments, private sector and civil society. It is of utmost importance in view of the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the new post-2015 development agenda. UN-Women has also provided a significant support to countries in ending violence against women, leading to remarkable results at service delivery and awareness-raising levels. Now further activities should be undertaken to strengthen legal and policy frameworks and facilitate the adoption of national action plans on ending violence against women and girls. We commend that 2013 was the first year in which UN-Women provided high-level gender expertise to the UN system for the majority of peace and security processes, as well as was more consistently engaged in humanitarian action. We are looking forward to further development of those activities.
Last but not least, in 2013, under the leadership of UN-Women, the whole United Nations system has achieved greater **policy coherence and increased system-wide delivery** on gender equality and women’s empowerment. We particularly welcome the first reports submitted by 55 UN entities, allowing to create the first baseline of the United Nations system’s work on gender equality and women’s empowerment. We hope that most UN entities will have aligned their policies and strategies with United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment (SWAP) by 2017. We also welcome the endorsement by the Statistical Commission of 52 gender indicators as a guide for the compilation of gender statistics and creation of a public data platform. We strongly believe that comparable data are at the core of measuring and promoting the progress, especially in view of the new post-2015 development agenda. We are also looking forward to effective integration in the system of 9 core indicators on violence against women.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to wish UN-Women to build on its success in implementing the new Strategic plan for 2014-2017 and reassure of Latvia’s steadfast support to its work, including in all intergovernmental processes ahead of us next year.

I thank you.