Mr. Chairman,

Let me first of all join the previous speakers in extending my delegation’s warm congratulations to you and other colleagues in the Bureau on your unanimous election. We are confident that under your skillful leadership our Committee will have constructive and fruitful deliberations. I pledge my delegation’s full support and cooperation in the discharge of your onerous responsibilities.

My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the statement made yesterday by the distinguished representative of Fiji on behalf of the Group 77 and China.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive reports submitted under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

The Secretary-General rightly noted in his report the critical role of the full empowerment of people and social integration as an approach to the advancement of social development, and the importance of integrating fully and effectively the social dimension of sustainable development into the global development agenda beyond 2015. During the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in June 2012, Member States underlined the need to continue to give the highest priority to eradicating poverty, along with promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and protecting the environment. We believe that empowerment is a key driver to reduce the disparity. It contributes to improvement in health, education and productive employment and decent work for all. The continued implementation of the relevant categories of the Millennium Development Goals will be crucial for achieving the future we want. Social issues, promoting empowerment of people and social protection in particular should be included in the post-2015 global development agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Mongolia is strongly committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The Fifth National Report on the Implementation of the MDGs revealed that the goals on universal primary education, reducing child mortality and improving maternal health have been achieved in Mongolia. However, important goals of
halving poverty, providing housing and ensuring environmental sustainability still remain most challenging ones and require targeted interventions and redoubled efforts. To reach our development goals, the Government is working closely with all national stakeholders, including political parties, the private sector, research institutions, civil society and media.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to reaffirm Mongolia's commitment to the follow-up of the High Level Meeting on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities "The Way Forward: a disability inclusive development agenda towards 2015 and beyond". Disability is increasingly recognized as a cross-cutting development issue. However, persons with disabilities, constituting world's largest minority, yet remain largely invisible in most development processes. Member States are committed to strengthen further their concerted efforts to ensure that the persons with disabilities are included in all aspects of development.

In Mongolia, persons with disabilities comprise about 3.5 percent of its total population. Since 1995, Mongolia has been continuously working on mainstreaming disability issues into its economic and social development programmes and plans. Social protection, employment, education, infrastructure and cultural issues based on the special and development needs of persons with disabilities were included into some 60 legal and other 50 national policy documents. These documents have been complemented by the UN ESCAP regional initiatives including Biwako Millennium Framework\(^1\) and Incheon Strategy\(^2\) that were adopted and followed by Mongolia.

Mr. Chairman,

Under the present agenda item we have the Report of the Director-General of UNESCO on the final evaluation of the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade. It is gratifying to note that the UN Literacy Decade was marked by steady progress with millions of young people and adults becoming literate. The number of out-school children of primary school age declined from 108 million in 1999 to 57 million in 2011. More importantly it ensured longer-term support for literacy. But, as the report states that it was considerable yet inadequate progress. The number of illiterate adults in some regions, in particular South and West Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, actually increased hosting together three quarters of the world's illiterate adults and almost 90 percent of illiterate youth. Disparities also exist in the developed world, the report states. One of five adults in Europe and some 160 million adults in OECD countries are functionally illiterate.

We had reaffirmed on numerous occasions that the quality basic education is crucial to nation-building, that literacy for all is at the heart of basic education for all and

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\(^1\)Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-Free and Rights-Based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, 2002.

\(^2\)Incheon Strategy to “Make the Right Real” for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific, 2012.
that creating literate environment and societies is essential for achieving the goals of eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, achieving gender equality, ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy, promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The 2005 World Summit placed a particular emphasis on the critical role of both formal and non-formal education in the achievement of poverty eradication and other development goals. Therefore, the international community needs to reinforce political will and financial commitment, ensure more coordinated actions in the years to come.

My delegation firmly believes that promotion of literacy should be at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda. We will be submitting together with our co-sponsors a draft resolution on this matter for the consideration of this Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

As we all know, the year 2012 was proclaimed as the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) and it contributed to increasing global awareness of cooperatives and promoting the cooperatives.

Today, in Mongolia, there are some 2,400 cooperatives operating in different areas of national importance. They include fields such as: the processing of raw materials; savings and credit; sales, supply and procurement; services; and housing construction. Moreover, cooperatives are crucial in rural and agricultural areas - for instance, cooperatives support the living of 37.7 per cent of Mongolians who rely on agriculture. So, within the framework of its IYC activities, in order to further assist rural areas, the Government of Mongolia launched a three-year “Campaign to promote the rural cooperative movement.”

The conclusion of the International Year of Cooperatives also marks the beginning of a new set of tasks. In accordance with GA resolution A/RES/66/123, paragraph 4, Governments and stakeholders are invited to formulate, finalize, adopt and promote a roadmap for ensuring effective follow-up in the aftermath of the Year. The proposed Plan of Action outlines specific actions for promoting cooperatives and advancing their work. It is our earnest hope that the Committee will endorse this Plan of Action.

Mr. Chairman, as in previous years, Mongolia will table today a draft resolution on Cooperatives in Social Development. It is our sincere hope that this draft resolution will enjoy full support of Member States.

Thank you for attention.