Chair,

The opening of this year’s General Assembly was encouraging. Sustainable development, “Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Success” and post-2015 development issues were firmly placed at the top of the agenda. Thirteen years after taking part in the Millennium Summit, Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg spoke at the High Level Special Event (on the MDGs and the post-2015 agenda). He concluded that the MDGs have been a great success in mobilising action and achieving results — reducing poverty and improving the lives of millions of people. The work of this committee should be an integral part of securing “MDG Success” as well as looking ahead to the next set of goals. The outcome document from the Special Event provides a good road map for our further work. So does the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which got off to a good start. We want the Forum to be a platform for partnerships between countries, organisations, civil society and business. It should drive the new sustainable development agenda, and it should be the main arena for post-2015 implementation and monitoring. We should also merge the MDG and Rio agendas into a single framework, and we need the active engagement of the World Bank in cooperation with the whole UN system.

Let me highlight three substantive areas of development which have been at the centre of our efforts and will continue to be of primary importance for Norway as we engage in the Second Committee towards 2015 and beyond:

First, health

The Rio +20 declaration states that health is a precondition, outcome and indicator for all three dimensions of sustainable development. There are links with secondary education for girls, which

(Check against delivery)
is important for combating teenage pregnancies; with child and infant nutrition, for our work against stunting and wasting; and with climate change and environmental protection, in our work against respiratory diseases, such as in the excellent clean cookstoves initiative.

Norway has given high priority to the health-related goals, in particular reducing maternal and child mortality and combating AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. We have achieved a lot. The lives of six million children and mothers are being saved – every year. We have been successful because we have been focused, and have pinpointed the most cost-effective measures. And we have worked together – governments, the private sector and civil society. But even with our intensified efforts, and even if we reach MDGs 4 and 5 by 2015, several millions of mothers’ and children’s lives will still be at risk. We will therefore have to continue our efforts on the current health-related MDGs after 2015. The SG’s “Every Woman Every Child” initiative deserves our full and continued support.

Second, energy

Energy should not be omitted when the new goals and visions are drawn up. We need a clear and ambitious goal for sustainable energy for all. We support the SG’s initiative in this regard. Access to energy is essential for development. The world needs energy. At the same time, we need to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. We cannot choose between economic growth and environmental protection. We need to reconcile the two.

To do this we need to develop more renewable energy, enhance energy efficiency, remove harmful fossil fuel subsidies, make carbon pricing more effective, and develop new technologies. Green growth is possible – in developed countries as well as in developing countries.

Sustainable energy is a priority for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). This became very visible at the high-level event arranged by Benin, Norway and the UN last month. Prime Minister Stoltenberg co-chaired the event alongside the President of Liberia and the Prime Minister of Ethiopia last month. The message was clear: sustainable energy for all needs to be fully integrated as a goal on the global development agenda post-2015.

Third, women’s rights and gender equality

Gender equality and women’s participation on an equal footing with men is a question of human rights. It is also a question of economic development and prosperity. The Nordic experience is clear and compelling: when women are empowered, the economy is powered. Gender equality and women’s rights should continue to be a separate priority goal in the new sustainable development framework post-2015. At the same time, gender equality should also be incorporated into all the other areas covered by the new goals.

We are ready to work with others to find ways to provide universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls, to end child marriage and violence against women and girls, to include women and their interests and concerns in peace-building, to end discrimination in political and public life, and to give all girls and young women access to quality education.
Fundamentally, this is about ensuring a life of dignity for all – about leaving nobody behind. We believe human rights, democratic governance, the rule of law and justice should be fully integrated and reflected throughout the post-2015 set of goals. The first UN High-Level Meeting on the MDGs and persons with disabilities, during High Level Week, was a milestone in this regard.

Chair,

*Finance* is crucial for global partnerships to function. Norway is committed to continuing a high level of development assistance, within a context where good governance, the rule of law, business investments, fair distribution and domestic resource mobilisation are the key factors for development. Innovative financing, debt relief and combatting illicit financial flows must also be part of the financing for development agenda. International and national resource mobilisation must be seen and used together in the most effective way for sustainable development. This also applies to assistance for capacity development and trade related issues.

Chair, let me now turn to the follow-up to the *Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR)*.

First, the resolution on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) contains a clear call for accelerated reform of the UN Development System (UNDS). This needs to be followed up by all. We are pleased to see that the UN Development System has taken rapid action with the agreement on strategic priorities for 2013–16 and the separate action plan for following up the QCPR, and that the major UN funds and programmes have integrated reform issues in their new strategic plans and results framework. The UN Development System has a golden opportunity to improve its relevance, efficiency and effectiveness, and we cannot afford to let this opportunity be wasted.

Second, the way we – as member states – fund the UNDS is crucial for the success of the reform efforts. As called for in the QCPR, funding of individual agencies needs to move further towards core funding and softly earmarked funding. And we have to ensure that there are funds available for programme expenses in the increasing number of countries adopting the Delivering as One modality. With the present low level of core funding, the agencies have limited flexible resources that can be used for this purpose. Norway therefore believes that there is still a need for dedicated funding for Delivering as One, in the form of contributions to One Funds at country level as well as a global gap-filling mechanism.

Third, Norway welcomes the UNDS agreement on cost-sharing of the resident coordinator system. We appreciate that some agencies have included their share in their budgets. It is the responsibility of entities that have not yet done so and members of their governing bodies to ensure that the agreement is implemented.

Fourth, the impact of the reform agenda has to be documented through better organisation-wide results reporting by individual agencies and better joint results reporting at country level. Likewise, progress on the implementation of the QCPR must be systematically monitored and reported on. Our impression is that close collaboration between DESA and the UNDG has now been established and we are looking forward to a jointly developed framework that makes it
possible to monitor the expectations for change in the QCPR in a meaningful way and without over-burdening the system.

Chair,

Norway has continuously advocated reform of the UN’s working methods, including the General Assembly. We encourage the Chair to set aside enough time to debate this matter and reach conclusions, also in the light of the recent resolution on ECOSOC reform.

Finally,

Our overall priority for the coming months must be to take action and give guidance to accelerate efforts to reach the MDGs by 2015, and to start shaping a universal sustainable development framework with concrete, clear and measurable goals towards 2030, with poverty eradication, economic transformation, and environmental sustainability at its core.

Thank you, Chair.