Thank you Mr. President,

On behalf of Bangladesh delegation, I join others to congratulate you, Mr. President and other members of the Bureau. I also convey our deep appreciation to the Executive Director Dr. Anthony Lake for his comprehensive statement this morning.

**Mr. President,**

02. The statement of the Executive Director before us rightly points to the ongoing and emerging challenges for the achievement of UNICEF’s objectives. We recognize that we still have a long way to go to bring changes to the lives of the children and protection of child and their rights are very important. For over a decade, the MDGs have been a guiding force on many issues affecting the lives of children but the MDGs are set to expire next year. However, we are committed to see that children remain at the centre of the post 2015 development goals. The very fact that still more than 3 million new-born and half million women continue to die annually from child-birth related causes and millions are out of school, ask for dedicated efforts on our part. To achieve the MDG 5, we have a daunting task still ahead. I have no doubt that 2014 is very important for UNICEF as this year would be the 1st year of 2014-17 Strategic Plan implementation year that is likely to face many challenges including funding of an amount of US$ 16 billion in the total plan period.

**Mr. President,**

03. We recognize that Strategic Plan 2014-2017 funding is a very important task for all of us. For funding the UNICEF Strategic Plan during 2014-2017 the financial estimates forecasts that total revenue will be $ 4,034 million in 2014, which is a decline of 17 percent from 2013. In the estimate it is mentioned that total expenditure in 2014 will require $ 4,278 million, exceeding revenue by $ 244 million. This deficit will be financed from cash balances as mentioned in the estimate. In the report mentioned that total expenditure will be adjusted by reducing at a lower level if total revenue declines further in 2015 as forecasted, So this gives as a frustrating picture of the financial position of the organization and ultimately these expenditure will reduce the cash balance of the UNICEF. So we will urge development partners to rethink the issue so that a striking cash balance always remains in the organization.
04. In the financial review report it is also mentioned that in 2013 core fund decreased by 2% whereas non-core resources experienced an unprecedented growth of $ 935 million which is about 35% growth in a single year. The report of the private Fund raising mentioned that total contribution in 2013 were $ 1.19 billion. But here it was more in non-core resources, still we appreciate the role of UNICEF for harnessing the private sector resources where public sector contribution is shrinking.

Mr. President,

05. Currently UNICEF is organizing a structured dialogue on financing results of the UNICEF Strategic Plan and critical mass of core resources in response to General Assembly resolution 67/226 of 21 December 2012 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR). We appreciate that UNICEF has actively engaged like other funds and programmes through a series of consultations, to discuss and identify a harmonized approach to respond to the QCPR mandates of structured dialogue and critical mass of core resources. During the dialogue with member-states various suggestions were made for UNICEF. We think following two are very important: (a) identify the best mix of core and high-quality non-core resources to fund the results of the Strategic Plan; (b) broadening the donor base, including attracting more non-traditional donors.

Mr. President,

06. We all know that over the course of the next year, Member States will be negotiating a new global framework and goals for sustainable development. Much work has already been accomplished, including the release of the final report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals in July 2014. In addition, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing is about to release its report on financing these new goals. So UNICEF has to face lot of challenges like revision of the Strategic Plan at its mid-term in 2016 to incorporate and be aligned with the agreed post-2015 agenda and the resource mobilization will be the paramount importance. In view of consultation we will urge UNICEF to continue dialogue with the development partners so that regular resources reaches to the optimum level of requirement.

Mr. President,

07. We note with satisfaction that a large number of countries including Bangladesh have achieved significant progress in net school enrolment and several countries stand a good chance of achieving universal primary education by 2015 (Goal 2). However, retention at the primary level, quality education and transition from primary to post-primary education remain key challenges in basic education. In the face of growing food insecurity, we would reiterate our call to UNICEF to broaden its complementary feeding programmes for young children, inter alia, forging partnership with WFP’s school feeding programme to help improve nutrition and help reduce dropout rate. This is more so as although Bangladesh has made substantial progress in achieving the MDGs yet stunting and underweight of the children because of malnutrition remains as a major challenge. Globally for example an estimated 165 million children under 5 years of age are stunted and it is as high as 36% in Africa and 27% in Asia.
08. We all know that, adequate nutrition is essential in early childhood to ensure healthy growth, proper organ formation and function, a strong immune system, and neurological and cognitive development. Economic growth and human development require well-nourished population who can learn new skills, think critically and contribute to their communities. It is needless to say that Child malnutrition impacts cognitive function and contributes to poverty through impeding individuals’ ability to lead productive lives. In addition, it is estimated that more than one-third of under-five deaths are attributable to under nutrition.

09. We all know, Child marriage is a problem which also persists in Bangladesh. Due to poverty, insecurity age-old tradition parents like to arrange the marriage of their daughters early. It robs a girl of her childhood, ends her education, exposes her to violence, exposes to disease and early childbearing; and puts her in a subordinate position for life. Child marriage prohibition law already enacted and it is strongly being enforced in Bangladesh, yet we need wide-spread public awareness programme on the issue to end child and forced marriage.

Mr. President,

10. In conclusion, Mr. President, Bangladesh is proud to be one of the major programming countries of UNICEF and many of its programmes are working very well, yet it has many challenges for our millions of children. More than 584 million children live in South Asia. We hope that the distinguished members of the Executive Board will give a more positive consideration and focus to enable the partnership between the Bangladesh and UNICEF to grow further and help to build a better and safe place for children of Bangladesh and South Asia.

I thank you.