Mr. President,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland Norway and my own country Sweden.

First, let me thank UNICEF for the background document “Financing the UNICEF Strategic Plan 2014-2017” as well as for the consultative approach on funding issues since the adoption of the QCPR resolution which put funding of the Strategic Plan and the Integrated Results and Resources Framework at the center of the Executive Board’s agenda.

The Nordic countries acknowledge the work done on developing common principles for the concept of critical mass of resources and core resources.

For the Nordic countries, core contributions are - and should remain - the bedrock of UNICEF funding. This is a prerequisite if the Organization is to be strategic, responsive and predictable in its delivery of results at the request of programme countries. We welcome that UNICEF is working hard to increase its donor base, but the continuous imbalance between core- and non-core funding is a real concern.

Although regular funding must remain a priority, it is timely to take a fresh look at the non-core resource base, with the aim to make it more flexible in its design and predictable in its provision, while ensuring alignment with the Strategic Plan and national priorities as manifested through the Country Programmes. This is vital for the implementation of the Strategic Plan which has been agreed by all Member states.

Mr. President,

For the Nordic countries, discussing the alignment of funding to the implementation of the Strategic Plan is not a one-off event. Rather, a recurring structured dialogue on how to finance the priorities we have set for UNICEF is a question of the Executive Board assuming the strategic role that we are here to fulfill.

We therefore invite UNICEF to continue the engagement with Member States in a structured dialogue on funding on an annual basis.

As a tool to support these dialogues, as well as to assist donors in making more informed funding decisions, we welcome the work undertaken by UNICEF to develop a publicly accessible online platform for tracking results and resources. Transparency, a results-oriented approach and efficiency are of key importance to UNICEF’s partners. Also, additional attention needs to be paid to risk management.

Looking ahead, we would like to highlight the following possible avenues:

Our deliberations on critical mass point to the importance the Nordic countries, and many others with us, place on a solid core funding base. In our subsequent structured dialogues, this aspect is essential and we urge UNICEF to develop incentives for Members States to provide core contributions. Such incentives could include greater visibility, recognition, better results reporting and more strategic partnerships with providers of core funding at global, regional and country level.
Another important aspect is the exploration of incentives, mechanisms and funding windows to facilitate a shift from restricted to more flexible non-core. By flexible non-core we mean funding that is provided to UNICEF in a predictable manner, funding that is minimally earmarked in order for UNICEF to invest these resources where they are most needed and that generate the greatest results, and funding that is aligned with the priorities that the Executive Board has set for UNICEF.

Mr. President,

To this effect, we propose to move from principles to implementation and we invite the other members of the Executive Board to join us in requesting UNICEF – while implementing its resource mobilization strategy to fund the strategic plan – to emphasize incentives to broaden and deepen the core donor base as well as to shift non-core in a direction of becoming minimally earmarked. The annual structured dialogue on funding will provide an opportunity for the Member states to monitor the predictability, flexibility and alignment of resources provided to UNICEF.

Thank you.