Statement of
The Islamic Republic of Iran
On the Observance of the International Year of the Family
The United Nations General Assembly

New York, 3 December 2014

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. President,

If a country is to live in peace and prosperity, free from want, free from fear, free from corruption, free from crime and become a nation of beautiful minds, affluent with ethics there are two key societal members who can make a difference. They are the father and the mother who create the family.

The Celebration of the International Year of the Family was decided by the United Nations General Assembly in recognition of the central role that the family plays in social development and the need to focus on a comprehensive people-centered perspective on development issues.

The Observance of the Twentieth Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, creates a momentum, to remind the international community time and
again of the important objectives of the International Year of the Family. It creates also an opportunity to refocus our attention to the impeccable role that the family plays as a major contributor to the international development efforts.

It goes without saying that strengthening the family can contribute to eradicating poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and even Ebola.

Mr. President,

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals, especially those related to eradicating poverty, advancing education and reducing maternal mortality, is a great challenge. The means for advancing these goals can be better equipped by placing greater emphasis on strategies that incorporate the role of the family.

By the same token, the family policy development should be included in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda by inviting member states and UN system organizations to take into account the role of the family as a major contributor to sustainable development. Therefore, the need to strengthen family policy development in order to achieve internationally agreed development goals should be emphasized.

The demographic, social and economic changes occurring around the world that affect the family, more or less everywhere, notwithstanding, the family remains the basic societal unit of reproduction, consumption, asset-building and in many parts of the world production. The Family bears the primary responsibility for the development, education and socialization of children. It provides material and non-material care and support to its members and is the backbone of intergenerational solidarity and social cohesion.

The achievement of development goals depends, to a significant extent, on how the family and its members are empowered to fulfill their numerous functions. Accordingly, family-oriented policies have a unique role to play in helping families to fulfill their functions and benefit society at large.
Mr. President,

Although, there is no specific international instrument to advance a family perspective in development, Governments have been actively pursuing family-oriented policies at the national level, largely in response to the increasing challenges faced by the family.

In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the family is the fundamental unit of society and the main center for the growth and edification of human being. Article 10 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran stipulates that "Since the family is the fundamental unit of the society, all laws, regulations, and pertinent programs must tend to facilitate the formation of the family, and to safeguard its sanctity and the stability of family relations on the basis of the law and the ethics of Islam".

The government of Islamic Republic of Iran in pursuing the Iranian religious and cultural values and in fulfilling its international obligations, is fully committed to continue its efforts to ensure the provision of necessary protection and promotion of the institution of the family. For the same vein, concrete measures have been undertaken by relevant authorities and stakeholders in Iran. I will touch upon some of these measures as follows:

- Integrating the family-perspective in the five-year national development plans, and accordingly, allocating necessary budget for protection and promotion of the institution of the family;

- Providing grants and loans with preferential terms to the families in need, especially to the female single-headed households;

- Providing public health services to low income households, especially in rural areas;

- Establishing consultative centers at the local and national levels in order to provide advice to those in need. These consultative services are basically demand-oriented and are provided on various family-related issues such as health, education, employment and family planning. These services are usually provided free of charge by the government as well as by civil society and NGOs.
• Facilitating the provision of necessary social security and protection for women and girls and ensuring the protection for mothers especially during pregnancy, as well as protecting orphans and widows.

• Investing extensively in the education and health sectors with particular attention to the women and girls with a family perspective, especially in rural areas;

• Promoting the role of pro-family NGOs and participation of civil society as well as think tanks, academia and research institutions in designing and implementing the family-related policies and programs aiming at strengthening and maintaining the integrity and well-being of the family;

• Formulating, amending and updating relevant regulations, laws, and executive orders aiming at providing further protection and assurances in regard to the rights of children and women against violence and abuse;

• Setting up arrangements and mechanisms in public organizations for the protection of family and its integrity through provision of variety of facilities and services;

• Establishing various committees and working groups in the different branches of the Government to deal with specific problems that members of the family, especially female members may face such as violence, unemployment, ageing, drugs abuse, and HIV-AIDS.

In closing, as the Secretary general well accentuated in his report on the on the Follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond in 2011: "The majority of the Millennium Development targets, especially those relating to the reduction of poverty, education of children & reduction in maternal mortality, are difficult to attain unless the strategies to achieve them focus on the family." Therefore, as the international community is at the historical moment of deciding over the SDGs in the Post 2015 Development Agenda, the inclusion of strengthening the family policy development is inevitably, a Must.
Thank you Mr. President.