Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The European Union and its Member States attach great importance to family-related issues. As far back as 1989, the European Commission published its first communication on family policies, and this has been followed by a number of important actions addressing such issues as parental leave, reconciling family and work life and improving the living conditions of vulnerable families.

We recognise the crucial role of parents, care givers and families in improving outcomes for children and young people, the important role of families concerning responsibility and care for the elderly and the need to provide support for families to do so. We share the view of many in this room about the valuable contribution that families make to strengthening our societies and the need to develop policies to support their role. Indeed, our aspirations for a transformative post-2015 development agenda cannot be realised without engagement of people through all levels of society, including at the level of families. But for these policies to be successful, they must also be inclusive. Across the
EU, as in the rest of the world, families have changed and continue to change with time - illustrating the fact that a family is a living, dynamic entity.

In this regard, we believe that we must all continue to recognise this diversity, as we did at the various UN conferences and summits of the 1990s and in their follow-up processes, and that our ongoing policy discussion and development should similarly continue to reflect the diversity of family forms.

Thank you, Mr. President