Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania fully associates with the statement made by a representative of the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to present Lithuania’s experience, progress made and implementation measures in the area of the rights of the child.

Lithuania presented combined third and fourth periodic reports on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child for the consideration at 64th Session of UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

In order to develop a coherent and coordinated institutional framework for the protection of the Rights of the Child, in 2012 Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania approved the concept to transform institutional system aiming to better protect the rights of the child. The goal was to strengthen the functions of management and control system in order to improve their performance and to ensure the smooth cooperation in the area of the protection of the Rights of the Child. State budget foresees to provide additional funds in order to strengthen the social work with families at risk.

This year we also prepared a draft Law on Fundamentals of Child Rights Protection. This provision is intended to ensure close cooperation between the administrative bodies of the municipality, as well as cooperation with the child's parents, the police, the Prosecutor's Office officials, and health-care professionals, representatives of non-governmental organizations, aiming to provide effective assistance to the family and to prevent the segregation of a child from the family. In order to promote the guardianship within the family it is intended to create a so called professional guardianship system, which we hope will have a positive impact on deinstitutionalisation of child care. For the time being reform of the Child guardianship system remains one of the priority areas in Lithuania. The inter-
institutional program of transition from institutional care to care within the family and community services for the deprived of parental care children and for people with disabilities is under preparation. The main objective of the programme is to ensure the harmonious development environment and suitable conditions for the deprived of parental care children, disabled children, children of the adoptive parents or guardians to grow up in a biological or social family and get help within the community. When implementing this program a non-fixed social services will be developed and help for children and families in the community will be strengthened as a complex.

Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania's National education strategy for the period of 2013-2022 is under preparation. One of the main objectives is to ensure adequate access to education and equal opportunities, maximizing the development of education coverage for children and young adults, in order to present to pupils, students and young people the best opportunities to expand the capacity of their individual abilities and to meet special educational and study needs. Particular attention should be given to children in rural areas, highly talented children and those at social risk, persons with special needs and the development of non-formal education. Seeking to reduce child’s exclusion and aiming to improve the availability of education services, educational assistance is given for disabled children and their families.

Increased attention is given to the protection of children health and the availability of health services. In September 2013 Mother’s and Child’s Health Department was established and started functioning under the Ministry of Health. This was done in order to develop and promote healthy lifestyle from infancy, to strengthen the health of mother and child and in particular, to pay great attention to the early diagnosis and treatment of children diseases.

In 2011 Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania adopted the Law on Protection against Domestic Violence. In this Law domestic violence is attributed to the category of offenses of public importance. The Law provides that victim of domestic violence is not only a person against whom the violence has been used, but also a child, who witnesses such a violence or lives in a violent environment. A complex (psychological, legal, medical) help is provided for a child, who has experienced violence or sexual abuse. This help is provided through non-governmental organizations for every child-victim.

In November 2012 the Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania has ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. It is planned to establish the Help Center for children victims of sexual abuse until the year 2016.

In 2012 our Parliament has also ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. In order to properly implement the provisions of this Convention and to enhance the
effectiveness of the combat against trafficking in human beings the amendments to the Criminal Code were adopted in June, 2012. On the basis of these amendments, the trade in human beings and the purchase or sale of children from now on are recognized as criminal acts not only when they are committed for the purpose of exploitation in prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation, but also slavery, forced labour or services. The criminal law directly indicates that the consent of a victim of trafficking for the purposes of exploitation does not remove the liability of the perpetrator.

Mr. Chairman,
I sincerely hope that States will share their best practices and will inspire each other to think about further measures to promote well being of children, positive social and emotional education, relevant participation of children in the society, inter-institutional and international cooperation and steps forward to protect their rights.

Thank you for your attention.