Mr. President,

I have the pleasure of delivering this statement on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States, and my own country – Canada.

We would like to thank Mr. Segone and the Evaluation Office for the annual report on evaluation presented today, as well as the report on the Corporate Evaluation of the contribution of UN Women to women’s economic empowerment and its management response, and the review of policies and practices to promote gender-responsive evaluation systems.

On the Report on the Evaluation Function:

The Report on the Evaluation Function is clear and provides us with a good level of evidence and analysis. UN Women’s mandate is complex, and evaluation evidence is consequently critical in order to strengthen effectiveness and to inform future policy and programming decisions. We view as positive the fact that the Independent Evaluation Office will start reporting to the Executive Board not only on the implementation rate of management responses to corporate evaluations, but also, on the changes, or lack thereof, in UN Women’s policies, strategies and practices that corporate evaluations have contributed to.

Several developments noted in the Report are worth highlighting. First, the comprehensive evaluation plan, including the regional evaluation plan, is welcome. Second, the creation of a Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System is a positive step, and should serve to allow the organization to monitor and improve the quality of evaluation reports on a regular basis. Thirdly, we agree with the idea of targeting higher-level results in a majority of evaluations, as an analysis of these results is key to ensuring organizational change. And finally, we consider the increased allocation to evaluation in the organization – from 1.3 % to 2.2 % - an encouraging step forward towards the 3% target, and were pleased to learn this morning that UN Women is on track to meet this target.

It is clear that evaluation coverage and completion rates need attention. We note that these issues have been recognized, and that steps are being taken to address the weaknesses. We would be interested in hearing more from UN Women about its plans and timelines in this regard.

With respect to the proposed approach and steps to be taken to increase the compliance rate with the system-wide action Plan on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women, we support the efforts of UN Women to continue to try to improve the rates of implementation of the UN-SWAP.

Finally, the fact that the Director of the Independent Evaluation Office is also the Chair of the UN Evaluation Group for 2015 means that there is considerable scope to advance the gender-responsive evaluation agenda. We stand firmly behind UN Women in this work, as you strengthen the capacity of
staff to conduct quality evaluations, in UN Women and other UN organizations, as well as in national governments and non-governmental partners.

On the corporate evaluation of the contribution of UN Women to women’s economic empowerment

Mr. President,

The evaluation of UN Women’s relevance and comparative advantage for women’s economic empowerment is important, as it contributes to improved positioning of UN Women at global regional and national levels. The evaluation confirms the importance of a clear strategic focus and an overarching theory of change for Women’s Economic Empowerment, as well as a future looking narrative. While it has taken close to four years to begin the process of inclusively mapping out a theory of change for this area of work, we are pleased to see that this work has now begun.

This area of work will take on even greater importance once the new development agenda is agreed at the September UN Summit for the adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. We have seen widespread support among Member States in the zero draft of both the Addis Ababa Accord on Financing for Development and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, for the essential role of gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment, including economic empowerment, as a key means to implement the new agenda.

We consider the recommendation to increase the focus on thought leadership on rights-based and gender responsive work on macroeconomic policy particularly useful, as it can strengthen the leverage, impact and effectiveness of the UN Country Teams. We encourage UN Women to cooperate with other partners like the World Bank Group, for example, when developing diagnostics for economic empowerment of women. We welcome the finding that the Entity’s current comparative advantage is in its policy and normative work, which we believe brings a rights-based perspective and approach to intergovernmental dialogue, and appreciate the recommendation that UN Women should further strengthen its leadership in coordination and joint programming to advance women’s economic empowerment within the UN system. We concur with the analysis that UN Women should make use of existing coordination fora at headquarters level and at country level, in order to avoid additional layers.

Finally, with respect to the management response on this item, we welcome the practice of presenting short and medium-term actions, and would like to recommend that future reports include more detail on those responsible for follow-up actions.

On the review of policies and practices to promote gender-responsive evaluation systems

Finally, Mr. President,

This review provides an example of commendable UN system-wide leadership of UN Women. The process undertaken was the first of its kind and serves as a baseline study into the status of gender-responsive evaluation across the UN system. The efforts being made are focused not only on creating UN-wide systems to encourage gender-responsive evaluations, but also individual capacity
strengthening. It has been rightly acknowledged that these two approaches are necessary elements for success.

As referenced earlier, the Director of the IEO is currently the UNEG Chair, and in that capacity is working to improve the evidence base on integration of a human rights and gender-responsive approach into evaluations across the UN development system. Additionally, publications, advocacy and practical tools aimed at integrating gender equality and social equity into national evaluation policies and systems are being created by UN Women in partnership with EvalPartners and the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation. Through this work, our delegations are pleased to see that UN Women’s global reach is growing.

Thank you.