Thank you Madam President,

On behalf of Bangladesh delegation, I congratulate you Madam President for your efficient stewardship of the Board. I also convey our deep appreciation to the Executive Director Dr. Anthony Lake for his insightful statement before the Board this morning.

Madam President,

The statement of the Executive Director provides detailed overview of the ongoing and emerging challenges for the achievement of UNICEF’s objectives. We recognize that we still have a long way to go to bring the changes to the lives of the children and protection of child and their rights are very important. For over a decade, the MDGs have been a guiding force on many issues affecting the lives of children but the MDGs are set to expire this year. We are committed to see that children remain at the centre of the post-2015 development goals. The very fact that still more than 3 million new-born and half million women continue to die annually from child-birth related causes and till 57 millions are out of school, 942 still live below the poverty level and out of 48 LDCs only 17 could achieved MDG-2a, net enrollment and only 13 could achieved MDG-5a maternal mortality. More importantly, there is either stagnation or reversal or low progress in 11 LDCs in MDG-2a. Still today under nourished children is pretty high in 40% of LDC, either it deteriorated or slow progress and therefore, MDGs agenda is not only uneven but also unfinished, therefore, it asks for more dedicated efforts on our part.
Madam President,

We note with satisfaction that a large number of countries including Bangladesh have achieved significant progress in net school enrolment and several stand a good chance of achieving universal primary education by this year (Goal 2). However, retention at the primary level, quality of education and transition from primary to post-primary education remain key challenges in basic education.

Madam President,

We appreciate that, the number of stunted children under five declined from 257 million in 1990 to 156 million in 2014, while the overall urban-rural gap narrowed. However, regional disparities persist and about half of the stunted children live in Asia and a third in Africa. Child protection has seen a marked improvement since 1990, with notable gains in reducing child marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and child labour. However, there is a substantial gap in prevalence of child marriage between the poorest and the richest: the poorest girls are 2.5 times more likely to marry in childhood.

Madam President,

It is to be mentioned that, UNICEF's has many achievements, as well as there are many challenges which were highlighted on 20 November 2014, when the world celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. One remaining challenge is to further reduce equity gaps among children. For this reason, UNICEF continues to support countries, communities and families to realize the rights of all children, paying particular attention to the most disadvantaged. While the overall impact of the equity refocus cannot yet be fully realized, important progress has been achieved in recent years. We are pleased to know, UNICEF undertook an increasingly active role in working with Government and civil society partners to incorporate child-focused targets and indicators in the post-2015 development framework. UNICEF is especially active in providing technical support to the effort to include targets on ending child marriage and violence against women and girls, and an indicator on gender parity in secondary school completion and learning.
Madam President,

We know that private fund raising plays significant role in UNICEF's programme activities but as well as non-fundraising engagement and partnerships also plays important role with the private sector in the National Committees for UNICEF and UNICEF country offices, managing strategic relationships with the National Committees, providing guidance for child rights advocacy activities in industrialized countries, and supporting the organization's corporate partnership and engagement function. It is mentioned in the private fund raising report that total private sector revenue for the year 2014 was $1.28 billion, of which $1.24 billion was from the private fundraising. The total private sector revenue is comprised of $441 million from regular resources and $708 million from fundraising of other resources. We are happy to know this is 14 per cent more than the total planned target of 2014.

Madam President,

We know that, Strategic Plan 2014-2017 implementation is critically important when Post-2015 development agenda will need the plan to take new shape and may be also redesigned. So resource accumulation and funding will play the vital role in making the new agenda implementation. In the report of the current Strategic Plan 2014-2017, it is mentioned that total revenue forecast to be $4.71 billion in 2015, which is a decline of 9 per cent from 2014. It is also mentioned that revenue is projected to decrease a further 9 per cent in 2016 compared to 2015. Although it is mentioned that, in 2017 and 2018 revenue is expected to resume gradual growth and total expenditures in 2015 are estimated at $5 billion, exceeding forecast revenue by $291 million where the deficit will be financed from cash balances. So it is evident that the planned expenditures will reduce the cash balances but UNICEF will have to continue to meet a prudent liquidity requirement which is very crucial. We hope successfully UNICEF leadership will be doing this job.
Madam President,

We all know that, adequate nutrition is essential in early childhood to ensure healthy growth, proper organ formation and function, a strong immune system, and neurological and cognitive development. Economic growth and human development require well-nourished populations who can learn new skills, think critically and contribute to their communities. Child malnutrition impacts cognitive function and contributes to poverty through impeding individuals’ ability to lead productive lives. In addition, it is estimated that more than one-third of under-five deaths are attributable to under-nutrition.

Madam President,

So, in the face of growing food insecurity and global economic downturn, we would reiterate our call to UNICEF to broaden its complementary feeding programs for young children, inter alia, forging partnership with WFP’s school feeding programme to help improve nutrition and help reduce drop out of rate. This is more so as although Bangladesh has made substantial progress in achieving the MDGs but stunting and underweight of the children because of malnutrition remains as a major challenge. Globally an estimated 165 million children under 5 years of age are stunted for example, it is as high as 36% in Africa and 27% in Asia.

Madam President,

Bangladesh is proud to be one of the major programming countries of the UNICEF and many of its programmes are working very well, yet it has many challenges; many of our kids are still out of schools, many are still street children, many are still under-weight, many cannot attend schools as there is still not adequate schools within each locality, nor quality teachers or modern teaching equipment. We hope that the distinguished members of the Executive Board will give a more positive consideration to enable the partnership between Bangladesh and UNICEF to grow further and assist in alleviating problems of our millions of children.

I thank you.