Madam President,

I express my felicitations and thanks to the President and Executive Director for their informative and inspiring statements.

As we prepare to ambitiously embark on the journey for “Transforming our World”, we welcome the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), that form an integral part of the 2030 Agenda to be adopted this month. The SDGs outline, as a major step, explicit targets on reducing inequality, ending violence against children and combating child poverty. Equally important is that the Addis Ababa Agenda agreed at the FFD3 has also recognized child focused investment as a central pillar of sustainable development.

These internationally agreed agreements are a testimony to our increased political will and unconditional commitment for a sustainable future, a world fit for safe, healthy and educated children.

Madam President,

In a world where over 570 million children continue to suffer in extreme poverty, the imperative of eradication of poverty, which is also at the very heart of the internationally agreed Agenda, is fundamental for achieving sustainable future for our children. We are appreciative of the emphasis given by UNICEF strategic plan to take into account the recommendations of the QCPR resolution of 2012 for the UN development system, including assigning the highest priority to poverty eradication.

UNICEF’s continued focus on “equity” as one of the important guiding principles of its strategic plan is indeed a welcome. Promoting greater equity in the development process by investing in the health, education and protection of the most disadvantaged and excluded children is of utmost importance, and must attain a high priority in our endeavours.

A strong financial situation of an organization is a testament to its work and results. We are happy to note that informed funding decisions and international support by all stakeholders has resulted in an increase in the Strategic Plan’s revenue in 2014, by way of contributions including from 135 governments.

We also welcome the increased investment, and the key role UNICEF is playing in the area of humanitarian action. In an ever changing funding situation, UNICEF needs to evolve to strike a balance between humanitarian action and development. Though we note that the rising expenditures would be met from the cash balances accumulated from previous years as stated in the UNICEF’s reports, we are concerned at the
projected decline in the revenue for the remaining period of the strategic plan. We are also concerned at the decrease in the level of thematic funding, in particular of lack of any funding for gender. Emphasis has to be on increasing donor incentives and expanding the donor base. The need to build strategic partnerships with all donors is well recognised.

We also underline the importance of increasing Regular Resources, which are the bedrock of the UN funding, as they ensure strategic, responsive and predictable planning and decisions for results delivery. A shift to a more flexible non-core funding would enhance predictability and long-term planning benefiting the programmes.

Madam President,

Since its inception, UNICEF and its committed staff have played a vital and commendable role to meet the needs of children, globally. As we embark on a fifteen year journey guided by the 2030 Agenda, UNICEF will need to strengthen its capacities, mobilise flexible and predictable funding and resources, train its manpower and align its strategies including the Strategic Action plan to reflect appropriately the targets of post 2015 development agenda and the FFD3. Increased transparency and accountability and course corrections listed by Evaluations are essential to guide future plans of actions.

We may all agree that the strategic importance of UNICEF in meeting every child’s needs is bound to increase in the implementation of 2030 Agenda. We believe that an unhindered international commitment and support to UNICEF in its efforts to ensure every child of the planet smiles, particularly those in the poorest and vulnerable situations, is the key to achieving our goals for meeting needs of children.

Madam President,

I am happy to state that with the resolve and commitment of the Indian leadership, coupled with strategic partnership with UNICEF, we have been able to overcome two major threats to the prosperity and future of our nation: first polio and more recently “maternal neonatal tetanus”. India is committed to fully support UNICEF, a reliable and trusted partner, for the realization of a “world fit for children”.

Thank You.