I would like to thank Ms. Madame Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director for her opening statement and for the presentation of the Report on the progress made in implementing the Strategic Plan, 2011–2013.

Estonia has always been a great supporter of UN Women to enhance the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls globally. In fact, we supported UN Women already before it was established - as the Estonian ambassador was one of the facilitators of the resolution that created UN Women.

Therefore we are especially glad to learn from the report presented today, that UN Women has not only proven that it is a necessary entity in furthering the enjoyment of all human rights by women and girls, but that it is also doing exceptionally good work in all its priority areas. Indeed, we acknowledge the fact that UN Women has in 2013 shown highest programme delivery since the Entity’s establishment and that in all the priority areas described in the report, UN Women has shown largest success in the last year of the strategic plan, in 2013.

As a member of CSW and as a member of the bureau of CSW this session, we would once again like to thank UN Women for its very good work in facilitating a successful fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

We commend your work in preparing the thorough guidance documents for assessment of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we are happy that Estonia has submitted its report on the implementation and that we can thereby contribute to the global review to be prepared on the basis of the reports of all countries. We would also like commend your work in creating the electronic possibilities for people around the world to associate themselves with the campaign of Beijing + 20.

As we have heard so many good statements already today, describing all the areas of UN Women’s work, let me concentrate on some key topics for us.

Firstly, furthering the normative framework on gender equality: As much as we always stress the importance of UN Women in translating the norms into practice and all three aspects of the mandate (normative, coordination and operational), we have to stress the promotion of the global normative framework. We all know that norms come into being if they are supported by so many agents that it becomes „normality“. Gender equality and the fact that the rights of women and girls are being considered as the normality thereby depend on all of us and UN Women has a great part to play in this. Thereby I would especially like to stress the importance of combating gender stereotypes and enhancing awareness raising campaigns.
among others for women and girls themselves - unfortunately the reality is, that many women and girls don’t even know about their own rights. Let me mention a campaign of Estonia that you all can watch in Youtube or on a web page http://www.stereotyyp.ee/en/videos. (Check the page form Papersmart).

In this relation we would like to stress the importance of education: we know that education is not explicitly included in the strategic plan of UN Women in order to avoid duplication with other entities and we agree with this approach. However, we know that education is the most powerful tool to enhance economic independence of women and to further the empowerment of women and girls. Therefore we would like to further encourage UN Women`s cooperation with UNICEF and with the Secretary General’s campaign Education First.

As to the women, peace and security agenda, we are concerned that in conflict and post-conflict situations, gender dimensions are still seldom considered. However, we would like to commend UN Women on the work in cooperation with the Security Council and wish you success with the global review.

As to the violence against women, I am glad to note that the Estonian Government that took office in March 2014 has made a commitment to sign the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention). In fact, we would like to COMMIT to do it, through the UN Women project COMMIT.

Fourth, IT solutions: we would like to stress the importance of an increased application of the modern ICT solutions in the activities of UN Women and I can assure you that Estonia is ready to support your projects in this field.

Fifth, cooperation among UN Women entities: we commend UN-Women’s recent cooperation with mechanisms of the Human Rights Council and we would like to stress, as always, the necessity of the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the leading role of UN Women in this regard in the reporting process.

As to the SDG-s, discussed now on the daily basis, we add our voice to the call by UN-Women and other stakeholders, who are calling for a stand-alone goal on gender equality, rights and empowerment of women and for the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all other goals and targets. We would thereby like to stress that sexual and reproductive health and rights need to be included.

We are glad to know that UN Women has increased its donor base, however the targets set are not met. Estonia has supported UN Women financially since its creation and we are committed to support it also in the future. Actually, I am proud to say that we are gradually increasing our support year by year and will do it also next year. This time, we would like to, in addition to the core- contribution- to support a field that is especially dear to our heart, namely, e-solutions and e-education.

Mr President,
The world would be ideal if we would actually not need to discuss the issues of gender equality and empowerment of women - if no one would ever question the equality of men and women – but we do need it and we will need it for a very long time until we achieve this goal all over the world. Estonia will assure UN Women our support in this regard.