Mr. President,

Sweden aligns itself to the Nordic statement delivered by Denmark.

Let me start by thanking the Executive Director for her presentation on progress made on the Strategic Plan. Investing in gender equality in general - and in women and girls in particular - is primarily a question of human rights, but also crucial for economic development and poverty eradication. This is why Sweden put gender equality at the heart of its development policy and has been a strong supporter of UN Women from the start.

In the short time since its establishment - and with constrained financial resources - UN Women has managed to establish itself as a key player for the advancement of gender equality on a global and regional level and in countries around the world. This is a great achievement. Sweden also welcomes the steps taken by UN Women in leading and coordinating the United Nations
system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Sweden would like to thank UN Women for the excellent report on the progress made on the Strategic Plan. The report provides a clear overview of progress made and is firmly anchored in a results-based approach. We appreciate the illustrative reporting on concrete results in relation to targets and indicators set out in the results framework. Further, we are pleased to see that UN Women is on track in relation to the majority of its indicators in the Strategic Plan.

As in previous years, Sweden encourages UN Women to further elaborate on challenges met and lessons learned. In this aspect the results from evaluations, corporate as well as decentralized, are of great importance. We also encourage UN Women to make further efforts to explain how activities, outputs and outcomes contribute to the achievement of impact and real changes for men and women.

Mr. President,

The annual report shows that UN Women has made good progress in building a stronger, more transparent organisation, a regional architecture and delivering high quality programmes at the country level. The results presented in the report are in line with Sweden’s experience of UN Women in the field.

Our impression is also that there have been changes towards a more strategic management and leadership at UN Women’s country offices and that UN Women has increasingly become more results oriented. We are pleased to see how UN Women works strategically in many of our partner countries (through the resident coordinator system) making progress in advancing gender equality and advocating for a clearer division of labour on gender equality between the different UN agencies. We
welcome the impressive increase in field positions (from 298 in 2012 to 413 in 2013).

We also support UN Women’s increased focus on humanitarian actions as we believe UN Women has an important role to play linking humanitarian action with development.

Sweden is convinced that UN Women, with its dedicated and qualified staff, work to achieve the best possible outcomes with the human and financial recourses available. However, there is always room for improvement. Despite the fact that UN Women has increased its staff at country level, the number of staff still does not match the need. We believe that investing in competencies in country offices is crucial as well as further strengthening UN Women’s coordination role at country level. Sweden welcomes that the regional structure is now in place, and looks forward to see it further strengthened in the years to come. Also, we would like to see increased commitment to involve men and boys for gender equality in programmes and projects.

Mr. President,

These coming days we will hear many Member States underlining the importance of investing in gender equality. The work of UN Women is critical in this respect as well as it is to the effectiveness of the whole UN System in this area of work. The responsibility to fill UN Women’s funding gap is thus in our common interest and our common responsibility.

Despite UN Women´s efforts to widen and deepen its donor base, only four donors provided approximately 50 per cent of the core contributions to UN Women in 2013. Sweden urges all member states to step up and support UN Women to fulfil its mandate and deliver on the priorities decided jointly by us.
In this context, we would like to highlight the strategic importance of structured financing dialogues. The structured financing dialogues aim at openly demonstrate how development results agreed in the new strategic plans of the respective entities will be financed. The ultimate goal is to make non-core resources more predictable and less earmarked, broaden the donor base, and improve the adequacy and predictability of total resource flows. It is also a key strategy for avoiding funding gaps and other unpredictable situations that affect the organization’s performance.

Sweden strongly encourages UN Women to initiate these dialogues with Member States, and to plan and harmonize them with other UN agencies. Collaboration on this matter will lead to considerable and important synergies.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me once again assure you of Sweden’s steadfast support to UN Women, politically and financially. We look forward to our continued collaboration and stand ready to work together with you for our common goals.

Thank you.