Mr President,

I am pleased to give this statement on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Israel, Netherlands, Sweden, UK, USA and my own country, Norway.

The quality of decision-making in an organization depends on its potential for learning. Lessons learned and best practices should be identified. Constant evaluation of performance is therefore a core element of results based management.

The evaluation policy of UN Women has been in effect since the beginning of last year. The reports presented to this meeting demonstrate that the Independent Evaluation Office is not only moving in the right direction, but has come a long way. The Office has an innovative and partner-oriented approach to evaluation, and has taken steps to ensure the independence and quality of its evaluation function.

We are pleased to see that 85 percent of UN Women’s 2013 evaluations were rated as “satisfactory” or above. Last year, of the 27 evaluations completed by UN Women, 25 % were joint evaluations, conducted together with other UN agencies. UN Women has a particular responsibility to promote coordination and accountability on gender equality and the empowerment of women. We would like to commend the Evaluation Office for the systematic approach to reporting on the evaluation function as well as the frankness that characterizes its

(Check against delivery)
reports, including the challenges UN Women is facing in advancing coherence within the UN system. This will allow wider usage of the evaluation findings and recommendations to promote gender equality and empowerment of women system wide, especially at regional and country level.

The gender equality evaluation portal and analysis of lessons learned and good practices, which will be initiated in 2014, will be helpful in this regard and will strengthen UN women's knowledge role. If we could suggest one improvement in the annual reporting, it would be to include a synthesis of key findings from the evaluations that year.

Mr President,

We commend the Evaluation Office for coordinating the first-ever Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the United Nations System. This report is the latest in a series of thematic evaluations that have been presented to the Executive Board. These evaluations have provided valuable insight into the impact of UN Women's normative and operational activities. Equally important: the reports have generated management responses, and in this case, a joint and balanced response of the agencies involved.

Whereas evaluations serve to identify challenges and trends, management responses are necessary to ensure that lessons learned will be followed up – and that management is held accountable. We therefore support the requirement that management responses should follow from all evaluations. Without a continuous demonstrated interest on the part of management, the evaluation function would not be able to thrive. Management responses to evaluations carried out at decentralized level are equally important, to ensure implementation of recommendations at regional and country level. In 2013, the percentage of completed evaluations with management responses was 85%, which is a decrease from the previous year. We urge UN Women's leadership to invest the time and resources needed to ensure that management responses are in place.

The Corporate Evaluation Plan 2014-2017, which is presented to this meeting, follows the priorities and focus of the Strategic Plan, which was approved by Executive Board last year. No less than 16 corporate evaluations are planned over these four years, two of which are joint evaluations. We commend UN Women for a flexible approach, which will allow corporate evaluation results to influence the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan in 2016, and to feed into post-2015 discussions of gender targets and indicators.

We underline the importance of further developing UN Women's monitoring capability to support meaningful evaluation as well as using evaluation findings to improve programs and resource allocations. Additionally, we agree that evaluations should be better integrated into program planning. We welcome UN Women's efforts in this regard, particularly for decentralized evaluations. This will also allow UN Women to plan evaluations based on the learning needs of the organization. We encourage the further strengthening at multi-country and country level and efforts to make evaluation capacities equally strong in all regions.
We are encouraged by UN Women’s efforts to increase the amount of funding, within its existing resources, that is dedicated to evaluation. We recommend that funding be targeted to the program areas most in need of review to inform decisions on future programming. We recognize that it will be a challenge to reach 3% - a target not reached in any other agency - but welcome further discussion on how it can be achieved in the future.

Thank you.