Statement of the Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy
H.E. Ambassador Inigo Lambertini

UN Women Executive Board
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

I wish to congratulate you on your appointment, together with the new Vice Presidents and members of the UN Women Executive Board. Italy is also very pleased to be back as a member and stands ready to offer its full support in the work ahead.

I wish to thank the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, for her informative address and for her leadership. No later than Friday we had the pleasure to open with her a multi-stakeholder side event on female genital mutilation, one of the top priorities of our international women’s advancement agenda, among others such as violence against women, forced child marriages, women, peace and security).

The past four years have been crucial for UN Women. It has worked tremendously to strengthen its structure and capacity to fulfill countries’ demands, positioning itself as leader and coordinator of the UN system’s work on gender equality. We congratulate UN Women for the positive results achieved.

2015 is a historical year for the UN development system. The review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action will take place at the 59th Session of the CSW. We are grateful to UN Women for facilitating the preparatory work of the national reviews and for offering an opportunity to assess critical issues in advancing women’s and girl’s human rights through last November Expert Group meeting. We look forward to the Secretary-General’s forthcoming report to renew commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action, the implementation of which has yet to be accomplished.

We continue to highlight gender equality and the empowerment of women as cross-cutting dimensions of the whole Post-2015 Development Agenda. These are “transformative stand-alone goals” that can tackle the structural drivers of gender inequality and discriminatory social norms and institutions underpinning these inequalities. The new agenda should fully recognize the role of women and girls as agents of sustainable development. In this perspective, we highly value the engagement of the Executive Director and management teams in advocating for clear targets and
indicators to achieve women’s rights and empowerment in the new Development Agenda.

Mr. President,

2015 is also the year of Expo Milan, dedicated to the theme, "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life". This event is an opportunity to underline the interconnections between the role of women, nutrition, and food security and to promote women’s empowerment as a crucial factor in sustainable development. Italy is also organizing a number of events on food security and agricultural development and will be working with UN Women to favor participation of rural women and girls from Sub-Saharan Africa. We are pleased that UN Women is a partner of the UN EXPO.

Mr. President,

Italy attaches great importance to the independence, effectiveness and usefulness of the evaluation function of UN Women. A solid culture of evaluation should promote the use of evidence-based information and lessons-learned in the decision-making process and accountability. This will ensure that the Organization operates effectively and efficiently, continuously improving its performance. We acknowledge the progress it has made in consolidating the evaluation function and its independence. We also concur with the Global Evaluation Advisory Committee’s recommendations identifying areas for further improvement, including the review of the Evaluation Policy in 2016.

As regards the Report of the Board of Auditors, we welcome the unqualified audit opinions for 2013 that the Organization has received. While stressing the importance of promptly applying long-standing recommendations, we welcome the progress made in implementing previous recommendations by the Board of Auditors. The report recommends five areas for dedicated action: we would appreciate receiving more information as to which measures are being considered by UN Women.

Mr. President,

Italy is fully committed to a strong multilateral system in which the UN plays a key role. The United Nations system of operational activities for development contributes to ensuring peace for a sustainable world, where men and women can fully enjoy their rights on an equal basis. UN Women is vital to translating this objective into reality. Therefore, in 2015 Italy will continue to support the regular budget of UN Women at least at same level of last year.