Thank you Mr. President.

01. On behalf of Bangladesh delegation, I congratulate you on your election, as President of the UN-Women Executive Board. At the same time, I also congratulate the Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General Madam Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka for her comprehensive and insightful statement this morning. Her statement provided a detailed overview of the efforts and challenges that are being faced by the UN-Women during its current year.

Mr. President,

02. We expect gender equality and empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda. And in this respect we appreciate the very timely and appropriate campaign of the "HeForShe" and expect that this will bring meaningful and positive results in improving women empowerment and gender equality and especially help in reducing violence against women and girl child in our societies. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which is an outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995), emphasized the principle of shared power and responsibility among women and men at home and in the workplace. Other landmark documents such as the outcomes of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the 48th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (2004) also encouraged men and boys to fully participate in actions to achieve gender equality. In this context, UN Women's campaign for building a complete and balanced society of mankind is highly welcomed.

Mr. President,

03. We appreciate the aim of enhancing the organizational use of evaluation findings of the UN-Women under the 2014-2017 corporate evaluation plan. In the evaluation reports, the good news is, it has been found that UN-Women have largely been successful in delivering planned activities. However, bad news is, the evaluation reports also found that the UN-Women had no monitoring systems in place to systematically collect outcome-level data. Naturally, we expect that the UN-Women will take into consideration of all the findings of the evaluation reports.
Mr. President,

04. We consider that the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) in 2012 by UN-Women as a major achievement. The Board of Auditors has made the recommendations to enhance its monitoring of advances to implementing partners to verify the correct use of the funds and achievement of results and expected outputs. The Board of auditor also noted that out of the 22 recommendations which remained outstanding as of 31st December 2012, 13 recommendations or 59% had been implemented while 41% or 9 recommendations were under implementation. Question is, have those been implemented?

Mr. President,

05. We know the mandate of the UN-Women for the structured dialogues on financing is very important for operational activities of the UN development system as recommended by the QCPR guidelines (GA/Res/67/226). We think the structured dialogue on financing will bring augmented flow of resources needed for future implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017. As we all know that the critical mass of resources is the minimum level of resources that UN-Women needs in order to achieve its Strategic Plan 2014-17, endorsed by the UN-Women Executive Board.

Mr. President,

06. Being a signatory to the MDGs, CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and as a champion of gender parity and women empowerment, Bangladesh is committed to establish (1) equal rights for men and women in every sphere of the society and the state, and (2) ensure unrestricted opportunity for women in all kinds of activities involving national development, policy making, and political, administrative, economic, social and cultural issues. In order to facilitate the attainment of these goals, we have already formulated National Women Development Policy, 2011. Moreover, Elimination of Family Violence and Protection Act 2010 has been formulated with a view to stopping violence against women. At present, 88,000 rural mothers all over the country and 67,500 garment workers are receiving maternity allowances given to benefit poor pregnant mothers.

Mr. President,

07. To empower women and also to make them capable to efficiently discharge their responsibilities, the GoB has attached top priority to girls education. In Bangladesh Primary level education is compulsory and free for all children aged between 6 and 10. All children attending primary and secondary schools receive textbooks free of cost on the first day of the year in a festive atmosphere. This year on the 1st of January our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the free distribution of more than 326 million, I repeat 326 million text books to the students. Not a small accomplishment! The education of girls up to grade XII in public institutions is also tuition free. Apart from this, to encourage girl students to continue their studies and also to reduce drop-out rates, the government is giving stipends especially to girl students. Government's proactive strategy for girls education resulted in gender parity---for example, in Primary school, female enrolment is 51% and in Secondary schools, it is 53% while male is 47%, a sharp departure of from few years ago when male was 65% and female was 35%.
Mr. President,

08. In order to help women empowerment, the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) has instituted gender-responsive budgeting so that budget is correctly spent on women. It has also created a reserve quota for women employment at every level of administration to enhance women participation in government jobs. No wonder, there are Women Judges, Women Ambassadors, Women Secretaries, women police and army officials. In Bangladesh, the top political leadership including the head of Government, the Speaker of the Parliament, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the House, the Deputy Leader of the House, the Agriculture Minister -- all are still women. Government also made a rule that in each Union, (lowest administrative tier) if the elected Chair is a male, then the Vice Chair has to be a female and vice versa. More than 14,000 women are elected as public representatives.

Mr. President,

09. We understand that resource mobilization effort is to strengthen the UN-Women and its work in various decision-making forums thereby enabling its efforts to increase the volume of resources and secure long-term, predictable, flexible and less earmarked resources that are aligned with the Strategic Plan and mandate of UN-Women. In this regard, UN-Women may consider putting emphasis 'on the importance of core resources that are the highest effective quality funding to the organization as they support the implementation of the full range of outcomes set out in the Strategic Plan.

Mr. President,

10. Violence against women is a common phenomenon everywhere, even in rich and developed societies. It is still persists in Bangladesh. Therefore, the GoB has given high priority to ensuring protection of women against violence. Besides legal protection, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA) operates a Central Cell to ensure coordination of work on prevention of violence against women and children and extends necessary support to the victims of violence. The MOWCA now maintains a helpline (10921) to provide legal, medical, rehabilitation and counselling help to victims of violence. Bad news is, till to-date, violence is not over, till to-date, child marriage is daunting us, till to-date, there is discrimination between male and female. Therefore, the challenges of UN-Women is not over. It has to gear up its efforts in a coherent and coordinated way so that it can create a global wave that can wipe out women discrimination and violence against women across all nations.

Mr. President,

11. Finally, We would request UN-Women for more focused efforts on widening and deepening its partnership base for more resources to fully implement the Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and I would like to reiterate our fullest support to the UN Women in its journey towards changing the lives of millions of girls and women across the globe including that of ours. Let us hope for that day when all sorts of discrimination against men and women would be a thing of the past. I shall conclude, Mr. President, by drawing your attention to few lines of a poem of our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam who wrote more than 70 years ago. He wrote,

'Bisheshe ja kichu mohan srithi chiro kollankor
Ordek thar koriache nari ordek thar nor'.

Meaning:
'Whatever great that have been created in this planet earth, or whatever beneficial that have been created, half of it was done by men, and half by women'.

I thank you Mr. President.