Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President,

Allow me first to thank the Executive Director for her comprehensive statement, which shows the Strategic Plan’s continued relevance within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with the other two reports for their concrete outline.

Italy is strongly committed to supporting the UN System in its efforts to attain gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, a constant priority of our international cooperation. We acknowledge the crucial role played by UN Women in this field. UN Women’s contribution, moreover, has been key for putting gender equality and women’s empowerment at the center of the 2030 Agenda, both as a stand-alone goal and as an integral part of the process toward full gender mainstreaming.

We commend UN Women for the significant results achieved in the field of development as shown in the Strategic Plan’s Midterm Review, but we are aware of the many challenges ahead. The Executive Director’s report states that progress towards gender equality has been too slow and uneven, and has even regressed in some contexts. This is a wake-up call for all of us.

The importance of gender issues and the quality of UN Women’s work should be better matched in financing. For this reason, in 2016 Italy has increased its core contribution to UN Women by 50%. We strongly believe that contributing to the
Entity’s regular resources budget is key for ensuring its ability to operate smoothly and effectively, fulfilling its multi-level operational, coordinating and normative role.

By doing so, we could better ensure a swifter achievement of the targets we have set to end violence against women, enhance women’s economic empowerment, and strengthen women’s political clout.

Mr. President,

Women, peace, security: women and girls are key to ensuring a peaceful, stable and sustainable development for our world. We commend the work that UN Women has done and is doing in this direction.

In the refugee and migrant crisis in the Mediterranean, as well as everywhere in the world, migrant women and girls are particularly vulnerable to violence and exploitation. In fact, the contribution made by migrant women to development proves vital for both sending and receiving countries. Italy, therefore, fully heeds the call of UN Women – as Chair of the Global Migration Group – to adopt a gender perspective on migration. While we commend the effort made by the Entity in this field, we should indeed more effectively integrate the human rights and development aspects of migrant women and girls into national, regional and international policies.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Italy’s firm commitment to working with UN Women – 5 years young and growing strong! - and our sincere appreciation to the Executive Director and the Entity’s staff for their devoted work.

Thank you.