Mr President,

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States and my own country Switzerland.

We wish to thank the Director of the Evaluation Office for the report on the evaluation function of UN Women and for his comments today. We commend the efforts made by the evaluation office, regional and country offices to translate the evaluation policy into practice.

The implementation of Agenda 2030 goes hand in hand with functioning evaluation capacities. Evaluations tell us what has been achieved and
how. Evaluations tell us about the challenges and draw avenues for adaptations in policies or programs to reach the 2030 targets. At the same time evaluations depend on the evaluability of a programme and the quality of data collected. The availability of high-quality, accessible and reliable disaggregated data is therefore the starting point to assess progress made under the Agenda 2030. In this regard, we strongly support UN Women on-going efforts in partnership with development actors, governments and national stakeholders to create additional capacity for gender sensitive quality data collection and analysis that also inform gender responsive evaluation.

We encourage Management to identify through the roll out of the results management system how best the challenges of quality data availability can be addressed. We commend the evaluation office for the development of practical guidance to support offices in the management of gender responsive country portfolio evaluations and by fostering quality assurance. This is of critical importance if we want to know what the contribution of UN Women at the country level is. It is encouraging to see that quality of evaluations has improved according to the external assessment. With so much of UN Women’s evaluation function taking place at the country level, we encourage to continue working on improving the quality and implementation of decentralised evaluation.
Overall the trends in key performance indicators are positive. We welcome the use of evidence and lessons from evaluations by field offices to inform their programming. This said, Management needs to focus its attention where improvements are still needed in particular the coverage of evaluation and the implementation rate. One quarter of planned evaluation were not implemented. Insufficient funding is one of the reasons and linked to this, lack of capacity. It is necessary to further analyse reasons for the delays, find preventive measures and to strengthen the capacity – especially at country level. We ask Management to further pay attention to the institutional or portfolio impact if key planned evaluations were not planned properly, not implemented or even cancelled.

We understand that UN Women is reviewing how investments in evaluation is calculated and that there is some discussion as to whether 3 % of the budget ought to be allocated to evaluation. We would welcome UN Women’ reflections on the evaluation function’s capacity and funding needs.

As the 2030 Agenda requires a collective effort of the whole UN Family to assist member states with implementation, independent system-wide evaluations (ISWE) will be more important than ever. This calls for adequate funding of ISWE. Going forward, certain evaluations that have so far been undertaken by individual agencies may be covered by the
ISWE, which could free up scarce financial resources. The upcoming QCPR offers an ideal opportunity to tackle barriers and create incentives for system wide collaboration, including for evaluation.

UN Women has a key role to play in promoting gender responsive evaluations and gender mainstreaming. We welcome the review of Corporate Gender Equality Evaluations in the UN System and strongly encourage UN Women to lead the dialogue on the collective lessons learned, the gaps and challenges for strengthening gender mainstreaming within the UN system.

Regarding UN SWAP and the external independent assessment of its evaluation performance indicator, it may appear as a surprise that UN Women evaluations were only “approaching” the requirements. This means they were not meeting the requirements yet and not exceeding them. This might impact on the policy dialogue that UN Women is conducting with other UN entities to promote gender responsive evaluations. We wonder to what extent the selection of performance indicators or the selection of evaluations explain the difference of rating between the UN SWAP and the very positive assessment of the quality of evaluation reports through the meta-evaluation.

The system wide transformative changes reflected in Agenda 2030 and in the Beijing Platform of Action will take their full meaning when realized.
at country level. Governments are surely leading the way and have the primary responsibility to implement the commitments made. UN Women can only provide additional support to existing efforts of multi-stakeholders to help reach larger impacts. Evaluations are among the critical means to tell us how gender equality and the empowerment of women are truly reflected in reality.

We remain fully committed to working with Management and the Evaluation Office in this endeavor.

Thank you.