



Mr. President,

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

We thank the Executive Director and Senior Management of UNFPA for the Revised Evaluation Policy. We would like to **commend UNFPA** for this **major achievement**. UNFPA has come a long way in developing this new Evaluation Policy, in close consultation with the Executive Board. **Tremendous efforts** from all sides have been put into its development. What we have in front of us today is a forward looking and strong policy document which will hopefully mark a new era in evaluation within UNFPA.

The Executive Board has repeatedly pointed out why it is so important to have a strong independent evaluation function. It is to allow UNFPA to attain **better development results in the field**. For achieving this, institutional learning, greater accountability and more evidence-based decision making are crucial.

The Revised Evaluation Policy constitutes a **timely achievement**. It sets the cornerstone for the implementation of the QCPR, which stipulates many expectations in the field of evaluation and system-wide evaluation. The Revised Evaluation Policy together with the new Strategic Plan 2014-2017 will constitute a unique opportunity to align strategic and evaluation priorities in UNFPA and to ensure that adequate resources are planned for and reflected in the Integrated Budget to be approved at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session 2013.

Mr. President,

The Revised Evaluation Policy brings about many **new achievements** for which we thank UNFPA. In particular **we welcome**:

- the creation of an **Independent Evaluation Office (EO)** with a direct **reporting line** to the Executive Board;
- the clear **distinction of the Evaluation function** from other functions like Monitoring and Audit;
- the adequate **resourcing** of the evaluation function both with an indicative level and a separate budget line in the new Integrated Budget;
- the adherence to and implementation of **UNEG norms and standards**;
- the delineation of **roles and responsibilities** among different stakeholders and the fact that core evaluations tasks are assigned to the Independent Evaluation Office;
- the **commitment of the Executive Director** to foster a culture of evaluation;
- a strengthened **role of the Executive Board** with regard to evaluation results;
- the commitment of UNFPA to **transparency and knowledge sharing** in the field of evaluation.

The Executive Board will consider with a view to approve the Evaluation Policy later this week. We would like to highlight the following elements with regard to the **Revised Evaluation Policy document** for further clarification:

- Four important documents will be regularly presented to the Executive Board with regard to the evaluation function: The annual report of the Evaluation Office on the evaluation function at UNFPA, the Annual Report of the Executive Director containing a part on evaluation, the biennial budgeted evaluation plan and the Integrated Budget including the budget for the Evaluation Office. We call for a **logical sequencing and timing** in presenting these documents to the Executive Board.
- In regards to the **selection of the head of the new Evaluation Office**, we encourage UNFPA to consult with the Executive Board, as is the case with other agencies such as UNDP, for which this practice is set out in its Evaluation Policy. We encourage UNFPA to apply the same practice that we value.
- With regard to the **independence of the Evaluation Office** we think this should include the accountability of the Evaluation Director for managing independently human resources of the Evaluation Office.
- We note with appreciation that the Revised Evaluation Policy underlines the **evaluability of programs** as an important precondition for evaluation and delineates responsibilities in this regard. However, we are concerned that the criterion of a weak evaluability of a given program could be used as a justification not to conduct an evaluation. We believe that – particularly in difficult situations - evaluation should be seen as an opportunity to learn about gaps and weaknesses and as a potential for better performance in the future.
- In regards to the planned next review of the Evaluation Policy we consider it very important that both **the implementation of the Evaluation Policy and the Policy itself are reviewed**.

Mr. President,

We expect that the Revised Evaluation Policy will enable the top management of UNFPA to foster a culture of evaluation throughout the whole organization. In this regard we would like to underline the **outstanding value the Executive Board has received through quality inputs furnished by the evaluation branch of UNFPA**. The evaluation branch provided very relevant, comprehensive and timely information to the Executive Board through its professional evaluations. We actively encourage the evaluation team to continue with their professional practice in the context of the new, independent Evaluation Office, with the full support of UNFPA management and staff.

We attach a great deal of importance to the **successful implementation** of the Revised Evaluation Policy, which we consider to be the start into a new era instead of the end of a process. We recognize that there are many challenges ahead. A new institutional set-up requires organization-wide changes and changes need time. Many actors will have to assume new roles in order to fulfill their tasks. However, we are confident that thanks to the high commitment of the management of UNFPA to promote a culture of evaluation real change will be possible.

The successful implementation of the Revised Evaluation Policy requires continued support by the Management of UNFPA and the Executive Board. In this regard we ask UNFPA

management to plan for the allocation of adequate resources to the evaluation function when presenting the **Integrated Budget** at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regular Session in 2013.

We consider the roles and responsibilities of **regional advisors** and regional offices with regard to evaluation as stipulated in the Revised Evaluation Policy very important. We are keen to see how regional evaluation support will relate to the evolving role of the regional offices and how this will be reflected in the Strategic Plan. Effective regional advisors require strong regional offices which depend themselves on a robust institutional and organizational set-up with a clear accountability framework and adequate programming and funding mechanisms.

The new Evaluation Office will be burdened with **many additional tasks** such as the approval of terms of reference or pre-qualification of evaluators. We expect UNFPA and the Evaluation Office to make sure that the **Evaluation Office core-functions are prioritized**, and focused on strategically relevant corporate evaluations and we encourage UNFPA to plan for **transitory arrangements** as needed when implementing the Evaluation Policy.

In closing, let me reiterate again our **appreciation for the work accomplished** over the past months, for the continued leadership of the **Executive Director Dr. Osotimehin**, in the process and the strong outcome achieved, the revised Evaluation Policy. Once approved, we look forward to its full implementation and the final impact it will have on those most in need, women, adolescents and youth.

Thank you, Mr. President.