UNFPA EB ANNUAL SESSION: JUNE 2012: DRAFT PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES MULTI-COUNTRY PROGRAMME: NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA INTERVENTION

(check against delivery)

Mr President.

I am pleased to make this statement on behalf of Australia and my own country, New Zealand.

New Zealand and Australia welcome the presentation of the draft Pacific multi-country programme document. We endorse the programme components as outlined in the document, and. support the focus on a modest number of specific outputs where UNFPA, in close partnership with national and regional partners, is able to make a tangible impact. This will build on sound results achieved to date. We know from our posts in the region that UNFPA support has greatly benefitted communities. UNFPA's work remains crucial in the Pacific, with its significant maternal and child health challenges, and large unmet needs for family planning.

We commend UNFPA for two new features of this multi-country programme document. First, the tiered programme approach recognises the diversity within and between countries in the Pacific region, and takes account of demographic trends including urbanization. It is a positive response to the requests from and needs of Pacific countries. Secondly, the introduction of an internal peer review process, despite challenges this presents to the organisation, will lead to better results in the field.

Mr President, while recognising the difficulty in balancing the competing needs to be both comprehensive and concise we would like to present four suggestions where more information would have been helpful. These are first, on the level of consultation, particularly with partner governments; secondly, the basis for the

non-regular funding projections outlined; thirdly, a risk mitigation and management strategy in response to the risks identified; and fourthly, we consider there is scope for some of the performance indicators in the results and resources framework to be more robust. For instance, differentiated by country, and defined to show what scale of programme is necessary to meet the target.

Australia and New Zealand support the priority UNFPA places on training. We urge UNFPA to adopt a methodology that allows partners to report on the outcomes and impact of the training, not just data related to the number of training activities conducted.

Mr President; Australia and New Zealand are in strong support of the direction being taken by UNFPA in its efforts to improve data integrity. The Pacific region is often cited as showing poor progress in achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, particularly the MDGs. Yet the data is often sketchy, so a complete picture is not always available. We commend UNFPA for the efforts it has made so far to build local capacity in this area. We urge UNFPA to continue to prioritise this issue, and to coordinate with other UN agencies, regional organisations and national governments.

Finally, Mr President

New Zealand and Australia look forward to continued collaboration with UNFPA in the implementation of this programme, which complements well Australia and New Zealand's bilateral aid and development priorities in the region. We stand ready to do what we can to support UNFPA in its important work in this region of the world.