Mr President

The International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC) welcomes today’s annual full-day discussion on women's rights and this morning's session focus on gender stereotyping.

The ICC concurs with the panel that harmful gender stereotyping is a pervasive human rights violation. It is a frequent cause of discrimination against women and girls and a contributing factor in violations of rights ranging from the right to an adequate standard of living through to the freedom from gender-based violence. Yet, despite the substantial harm they have caused, gender stereotypes and gender stereotyping are often misunderstood in human rights discourses.

The negative effects of gender stereotyping cannot be underestimated. Gender stereotypes remain deeply ingrained and are present in most everyday realities such as in education, work, family and relationships, health, leisure, determination of identity, cultural and social life.

Because of their egregious effects, gender stereotypes need to be addressed by different actors, including national human rights institutions (NHRIs) which have a specific mandate to promote and protect human right including women's and girls' human rights.

In November 2012, NHRIs from all regions met in Amman for the 11th International Conference of NHRIs on “The human rights of Women and Girls: Promoting gender equality – The role of National Human Rights Institutions”.
In the Conference outcome Amman Declaration and Programme of Action, NHRIs agreed on a series of broad principles and areas of work to promote gender equality.

Of particular relevance to gender stereotyping, NHRIs resolved

- To undertake education, promotion and awareness raising activities on the human rights of women and girls, gender equality and relevant international standards, with particular attention to eliminating prejudices and customary and all other practices based stereotyped roles for men and women;

- To monitor state's fulfillment of their human rights obligations; and

- To respond to, conduct into and investigate allegations of violations of women's human rights, including all forms of discrimination against women and girls.

NHRIs from all regions are committed to implementing the Amman Declaration and Programme of Action at the national level in consultation with all stakeholders. Moreover, a number of the ICC regional coordinating networks have developed their own regional action plans and provide support to NHRIs in implementing these plans.

The ICC highly commends the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) for commissioning a report in 2013 on gender stereotyping as a human rights violation. The ICC urges OHCHR to continue its leadership in this area by working, in cooperation with all stakeholders, including other UN agencies, NHRIs, the ICC and its regional coordinating networks, to strengthen the institutional capacities of NHRIs in addressing gender stereotyping as a human rights issue.

Thank you.