

# Finland's statement at UNIDO IDB50

*Agenda item 3*

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**Mr/Ms President,**

Allow me to congratulate you on your election. Finland assures its full support to your work.

I would also like to recognize the outgoing bureau for their excellent service.

The Secretariat deserves our appreciation for successfully organizing this important event.

I would also like to thank UNIDO Director General, Dr. Gerd Müller, for his report. Finland looks forward to cooperating with UNIDO under your leadership.

**Distinguished delegates,**

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union, including in condemning in the strongest terms the unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. We have firmly rejected and condemned Russia's attempted illegal annexation of the Ukrainian regions it has occupied. We reiterate our call for Russia to immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its armed forces from the entire territory of Ukraine.

Let me share a few remarks in our national capacity.

Finland welcomes the Annual Report 2021. We appreciate the important work that UNIDO does for the benefit of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, taking into account Finland's key priorities of gender equality and climate change as well as the human rights of all.

The value of UNIDO's work ultimately depends on whether it delivers concrete benefits to people in developing countries. My colleagues had an opportunity to visit Ghana just two weeks ago and to see first-hand UNIDO's work at the country level. I am very pleased to report that UNIDO is delivering tangible results, including for women entrepreneurs who have developed successful businesses exporting their products to the international markets. I would very much like to thank UNIDO and Ghana for making this visit possible.

Another example of concrete results at the country-level is the Public-Private Development Partnerships in South Africa funded by Finland. The partnership focuses on creating vocational skills, particularly for women and youths in the forestry sector. The project has trained 530 women and men, upskilled more than 60 trainers, and strengthened operational capabilities of 26 small and medium sized enterprises. The partnership is now expanding to Mozambique and Zambia.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

As these two examples highlight, gender equality and women's empowerment are important priorities for Finland. I am pleased that UNIDO has taken great strides forward in promoting gender equality particularly in its technical assistance work. I would particularly like to recognize the important work done by the UNIDO Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women Unit.

Finland encourages UNIDO to improve gender-parity within its own organization, particularly in respect to senior positions in the organization. We look forward to learn how the restructuring of the Organization will deliver to the gender and geographical make-up of the Organization, and encourage the Director General to continue the open and transparent dialogue on the reform process.

Finland's development policy emphasizes the rights of persons with disabilities, who account for 15% of the world's population, or one billion

people. If we are serious about reaching the SDG's, it is important that persons with disabilities are included in UNIDO's work.

### **Colleagues,**

Finland plays an active role in promoting circular economy as an approach to tackle global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss.

This includes initiatives such as the World Circular Economy Forum (WCEF), which was established by the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra. This year the forum is held in Rwanda in December.

I am pleased that circular economy is a priority for UNIDO also. Initiatives such as Switch to Circular Economy Value Chains are important in creating a transition to a more sustainable use of scarce resources.

Finland, together with the European Union, is funding this important UNIDO initiative.

### **Distinguished delegates,**

Finland welcomes Director General Gerd Müller's leadership to modernize and strengthen UNIDO as an organization that can provide new and innovative responses to the current global challenges.

It is important that UNIDO strengthen its position in line with the needs and priorities of Member States.

It is also crucial to recognize that the most important asset of UNIDO is a highly skilled and motivated staff.

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Finally, Mr. President, let me once again express Finland's support to UNIDO.

Inclusive and sustainable industrial development is more relevant than ever to tackle global challenges the world faces from eradicating poverty to fighting climate change.

Thank you very much.

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