

**REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ADVISERS**  
**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES**  
**28 November 2023**

### **Board Composition**

In 2023, following the election of two new members at the 2022 Assembly of Parties annual meeting, the Board of Advisers of IDLO included the following ten members: Mr. Stefano Manservigi (Chair), Dr. Ruth Aura-Odhiambo, Mr. Hassane Cisse, Mr. Diego García-Sayán, H.E. Mehmet Hasan Göğüş, Dr. Hoang Ly Anh, Prof. Githu Muigai, Mr. Patrick O'Brien, Mr. Ahmer Bilal Soofi and Ms. Zhou Xiaoyan.

### **Board's Advisory Role**

In accordance with IDLO's governing documents, the Board serves an advisory function within the Organization. Members of the Board serve in their individual capacities as experts in matters of the rule of law and development.

### **Board Activities**

On 12 July 2023, the IDLO Secretariat organized two online induction meetings for the new Board members, Mr. García-Sayán and Mr. Soofi, during which members of the IDLO Senior Leadership Team and the Secretariat provided an overview of the work of IDLO and the role of the Board within the Organization.

On 26-27 September 2023, the Board held its annual meeting in person at IDLO headquarters. The Chair and five members of the Board travelled to Rome to participate in the meeting.

IDLO's Director-General provided the Board with an update on IDLO's achievements since the previous Board meeting in 2022, including progress made on the suggestions of the Board. The Director-General also chaired a discussion on IDLO's work in challenging environments. A number of senior IDLO colleagues provided the Board with updates on IDLO's work on the following: justice for women and girls; climate justice; inclusive economic development, with a particular focus on IDLO's Investment Support Programme for Least Developed Countries; and working with regional organizations.

The Board Chair, Mr. Stefano Manservigi, opened the meeting, welcoming all the members, in particular those who were newly elected or had been unable to attend the previous year. He also acknowledged the members who were not able to join the meeting.

- In his opening remarks, the Chair gave a brief overview of the different thematic areas the Board would be discussing in the course of the meeting and encouraged the members to take the opportunity to share as much feedback and advice as possible to support IDLO in its mission.

- During her welcoming remarks, the Director-General highlighted that IDLO was operating in a highly volatile and challenging environment, noting that across the globe insufficient progress was being made on the SDG targets, including SDG16. She further stressed that such a scenario only served to underline the relevance of IDLO's mandate.
- The Director-General illustrated some of IDLO's key achievements year since the last Board meeting last year. During her report she made reference to the various suggestions shared by the Board in 2022 and indicated how IDLO had made progress on each of them.
- When addressing IDLO's advocacy efforts the Director-General highlighted in particular the 2023 edition of the flagship SDG16 Conference, organized by IDLO with UNDESA and the Government of Italy. At this point of the meeting a short highlights video of the Conference was shared with the Board.
- The Director-General also drew the Board's attention to the fact that IDLO's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary is occurring during 2023 and invited the members to share their thoughts and ideas on how IDLO could best leverage this opportunity.
- During the first session of the meeting, on "working in challenging environments", which included highlights of IDLO's work in Afghanistan, the Sahel and Ukraine, the Board expressed unanimous appreciation for IDLO's staff, in particular those working in the field. They encouraged IDLO to continue engaging and providing support to beneficiaries in difficult environments to the extent possible.
- The second session, which focused on IDLO's work to promote justice for women and girls, also sparked discussion around the fact that inequality and gender-based violence are global issues affecting all countries. Board members also raised the issue of promoting women's leadership in the justice sector, commenting that increasing the number of women in parliaments can help positively shape the laws being adopted.
- On the topic of IDLO's expanding work in the area of climate justice, the Board suggested IDLO consider developing tailored training for lawyers involved in implementing legislation to protect the environment. It was also proposed to look at ways to support those communities that are entitled to help from the loss and damages fund, but which lack the ability to access such financing.
- Following the discussion on inclusive economic development, the Board expressed deep appreciation for IDLO's Investment Support Programme for Least Developed Countries (ISP/LDCs) and suggested that expanded engagement with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) be considered as a way to source additional financing for the programme, given that the current funding will shortly end.

- The Board commended IDLO for the progress made during the past year in building and strengthening partnerships with regional organizations, in particular IDLO's successful EU pillar assessment. On the topic of strengthening relations in the Southeast Asia region, in particular with the ASEAN group, it was suggested that IDLO enlist the support of its Member Parties from the region and also consider the possibility of seeking observer status in the organization.
- Another topical area which the Board suggested IDLO consider looking into was that of artificial intelligence and the need for legislation to regulate this area.
- The Board also stressed the importance of securing the support of IDLO's Member Parties on both political and financial levels.
- Last year's idea of appointing goodwill/justice ambassadors was also raised and, in this context, it was suggested that IDLO's global network of alumni could be encouraged to re-engage more with the Organization.
- In his concluding remarks, the Board Chair summarized the inputs provided by the Board during the meeting and also proposed that going forward it might be opportune for the Board to hold an interim meeting at some point during the year, potentially online in order to reduce costs, in addition to their annual meeting.
- The Director-General thanked the Board Chair and members for travelling to Rome for the meeting and for sharing their valuable feedback and suggestions. She paid a special tribute to the outgoing Board member, Mr. Hassane Cisse, whose second and last term on the Board was ending in November, and who had served on the Board for 8 years. The Director-General's words of appreciation were echoed by the Chair and other members of the Board.
- The Director-General drew the Board's attention to the fact that 2024 would represent the final year of IDLO's current Strategic Plan, adding that during 2024 the Organization would undertake a wide-ranging consultation process to develop a new four-year plan for the period 2025-2028. She underlined that the Board of Advisers would be one of the key stakeholder groups that would be consulted as part of such a process.

The Chair ended the meeting by recalling that he would attend the forthcoming IDLO Assembly of Parties meeting on 28 November in Rome, to represent the Board and to present the Board's annual report to the Assembly.

The Board agreed to reconvene in 2024.

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