

**SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS  
MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES  
26 November 2024**

1. The 2024 Annual Meeting of the Assembly of Parties (the Assembly) of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) was held on 26 November 2024 at the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.
2. The meeting was chaired by the President of the Assembly, Mr. Rodney Hunter, Deputy Chief of Mission, United States Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome.
3. The documentation for the meeting is available online at [this link](#).

**AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING**

4. The President gave a special welcome to H.E. Edmondo Cirielli, Italian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, to H.E. Altangerel Oyunsaikhan, Minister of Justice and Home Affairs of Mongolia, one of IDLO's two Vice Presidents, and to H.E. Mr. Dawda A. Jallow, Attorney General and Minister of Justice of the Republic of The Gambia, a participant in the Partnership Forum later in the afternoon. He encouraged participants to attend the Partnership Forum, entitled "Rule of Law Solutions for a Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Future: IDLO's Strategic Plan 2025-2028", moderated by IDLO's Director-General, Ms. Jan Beagle.
5. The President welcomed the IDLO Director-General, the Member Party representatives and other participants to the meeting, and gave the floor to H.E. Mr. Edmondo Cirielli, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, to deliver opening remarks.

**STATEMENT BY H.E. EDMONDO CIRIELLI, DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF ITALY**

6. The Deputy Minister began by congratulating IDLO on its achievements during the past year, stressing the centrality of the rule of law in the current international scenario.
7. He referred to the strong alignment between IDLO and Italy in the promotion of the rule of law and the strengthening of justice institutions, a key priority of Italy's development cooperation, aimed at fostering peace and justice by protecting human rights, the principles of democracy and the consolidation of democratic institutions.
8. He referred to Italy's launch of the Mattei Plan and highlighted Italian initiatives to strengthen the efficiency, transparency and inclusiveness of African partner institutions, with priority being given to the protection and

promotion of women and children's rights, as well as to youth empowerment and digitalization.

9. The Deputy Minister expressed his appreciation for IDLO's unique mandate and role as the only global intergovernmental organization exclusively devoted to promoting the rule of law. Recalling the interconnected global challenges for the rule of law, he underlined the importance of supporting IDLO's work to foster access to justice.
10. He concluded his remarks by expressing Italy's unwavering commitment to IDLO, and he wished colleagues a fruitful and successful meeting.
11. The full text of the Deputy Minister's statement is available on the IDLO website at [this link](#).
12. The President thanked the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for his warm welcome and his timely remarks.

#### **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (AP/2024/1.1)**

13. The President referred to the provisional agenda (AP/2024/1.1) which had been circulated to Member Parties on 5 November 2024. There were no comments by Member Parties and the agenda was adopted by consensus.

#### **STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT**

14. The President began by saying the United States was proud to have served as IDLO's President during the past year, the first year of a three-year term.
15. He thanked the two Vice Presidents, Italy and Mongolia, for their leadership roles and their ongoing cooperation and advocacy on behalf of the Organization.
16. He complimented the Director-General for her inspiring leadership and tireless dedication, and thanked the IDLO Secretariat and staff, especially those working in difficult contexts around the globe.
17. Highlighting the complex environment in which IDLO operates, he noted that IDLO's mandate had never been more critical. He further noted that the rule of law is not simply a framework for governance but is the foundation upon which inclusive, just and peaceful societies are built.
18. He welcomed IDLO's achievements in the areas of anti-corruption and good governance, noting how vital such efforts are for strengthening integrity, accountability, and transparency of institutions at a global level.
19. He expressed support for IDLO's new Strategic Plan, Management Plan, and Budget, and emphasized the importance of providing continued support to deepen IDLO's impact and work toward a future in which every person lives with dignity and equality under the rule of law.

20. The President concluded by urging Member Parties to renew their shared commitment to the principals of multilateralism and solidarity, including considering serving on the Standing Committee and the Audit and Finance Committee.
21. He then passed the floor to the Director-General to present her report to the Assembly.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2: DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT (AP/2024/2.1)**

22. The Director-General began by thanking the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for once again hosting the IDLO Assembly of Parties and expressed appreciation for the opening statement delivered by the Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.
23. The Director-General recalled that 2024 marked the final year of IDLO's Strategic Plan 2021-2024, which was developed during the first year of her first term as Director-General, during a time of great uncertainty marked by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the years that followed, the Director-General noted there had been a steep decline in progress on sustainable development and backsliding on the rule of law globally.
24. Despite these challenges, the Director-General noted that the Organization's efforts to make justice systems more people-centred—by addressing barriers to access and strengthening institutional capacity to deliver justice effectively and inclusively—had produced tangible results. She highlighted that between 2021 and 2023, the Organization empowered 150,000 justice seekers, supported nearly 600 legal reform efforts, and built the capacity of more than 16,000 justice officials worldwide.
25. The Director-General underlined how recent years had been a tough test for the rule of law, international humanitarian and human rights law across the globe, referring in particular to the ongoing crises in Gaza, the West Bank, Haiti, Sudan and Ukraine. In the face of these global crises, she underlined the importance of the rule of law as a key driver for positive change.
26. She emphasized the tireless efforts of IDLO's staff, who often work in extremely fragile settings, including Afghanistan, the Sahel, Somalia and Ukraine, to empower justice seekers, support legal reform efforts and build the capacity of justice officials, to help make justice systems more people-centred.
27. She referenced IDLO's ongoing and active engagement in multilateral fora including the United Nations General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the High-Level Political Forum, as part of IDLO's efforts to keep the rule of law high on the global agenda.
28. In this context, the Director-General also highlighted IDLO's contributions to the negotiations that led to the Pact for the Future, the Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations, adopted at the Summit of the Future.

29. Turning to IDLO's six Strategic Objectives, in relation to strategic objective one (empowering justice seekers to claim their rights), the Director-General mentioned as an example the Rule of Law Observatory that IDLO helped establish in Afghanistan, aimed at tracking legal developments and offering an e-learning platform with free courses in Dari and Pashto to equip non-state justice actors with essential skills to face restrictions on movement and access opportunities. She noted that IDLO will continue its engagement in Afghanistan until mid-2025, following an extension of the current programme, and that she is actively seeking new sources of funding to continue supporting women and vulnerable groups in the country.
30. The Director-General highlighted IDLO's work in the Sahel, aimed at strengthening the criminal justice chain in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger through the promotion of fair trial and human rights standards, with a focus on local priorities. In Niger, she reported that IDLO's initiatives reached around 12,000 individuals, half of whom were women and girls.
31. Other examples cited by the Director-General included Uganda, where IDLO supported the judiciary in hosting the Africa Judiciaries' Summit on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), bringing together Chief Justices from over ten countries, including Benin, Eswatini, The Gambia, Namibia, Somalia, and South Sudan.
32. In Somalia, IDLO supported the establishment of ADR centres to provide free dispute resolution, aligned with international standards.
33. Turning to the second Strategic Objective (making laws and institutions work for people) the Director-General referred to IDLO's growing portfolio of work in the area of anti-corruption, highlighting IDLO's multitrack approach aimed at building capacity to prosecute corruption and delivering preventive measures to increase the transparency and integrity of the judiciary.
34. She cited examples of IDLO's work in this domain, in countries including The Gambia, the Philippines, The Bahamas, Costa Rica, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Honduras, Mongolia, Somalia and Ukraine. She also drew attention to IDLO's growing efforts to tackle common regional challenges, implementing subregional approaches to cope with transnational organized crime, as well as combatting trafficking in persons (TIP).
35. Referring to IDLO's policy advocacy in this area, she recalled the Organization's participation as an observer in the G7 Anti-Corruption Working Group, launched under the Italian Presidency, and more recently as a permanent observer of the G7 Anti-corruption Task Force for Ukraine, hosted by the Government of Japan.
36. Moving to the third Strategic Objective (reducing the justice gap for women and girls) the Director-General noted that IDLO promotes gender equality and justice for women and girls as a standalone objective, as well as mainstreaming it throughout IDLO's programmatic work. She referenced examples in a range of countries including Liberia, Tunisia and Uganda. The Director-General also cited the launch of a report on Strengthening Gender Equality in Law in Kenya,

which IDLO developed in partnership with UN Women and the Kenya Law Reform Commission, and a report on Financing Women's Justice Needs, highlighting the importance of aligning public spending and national budgets with women's justice priorities, particularly in addressing violence against women.

37. Regarding IDLO's fourth Strategic Objective (promoting inclusive economic development) the Director-General recalled a number of projects, including supporting revisions to the Law on Mediation in Mongolia; developing a comprehensive training handbook on insolvency law in Jordan; facilitating readiness for the Singapore Convention on Mediation through training, public outreach and collaboration with the Supreme Court in Kyrgyzstan; reviewing legislation, developing tools, and launching public campaigns to support mediation processes in Uzbekistan; assisting Liberia's National Investment Commission in drafting an amended concessions agreement through IDLO's Investment Support Programme for Least Developed Countries (LDCs); and supporting several LDCs in Africa to strengthen their investment frameworks.
38. On the fifth strategic objective (climate justice and sustainable use of natural resources) the Director-General underlined how IDLO continues to prioritize rule of law approaches to the sector, supporting inclusive decision-making, improved land governance and dispute resolution.
39. She referred to IDLO's participation in COP29 and further noted IDLO's participation at the SIDS4 Conference in Antigua and Barbuda, emphasizing the role of the rule of law in advancing action on climate, human rights, and equitable economic development.
40. The Director-General highlighted IDLO's growing collaboration with the Rome-based UN agencies, in particular the publication of an issue brief, in partnership with FAO, that synthesizes research from 40 countries and the EU, offering recommendations to protect food security during crises. As an advisor to the Group of Friends of the Right to Food, she reported that IDLO co-authored a policy brief for the Brazilian G20 Presidency.
41. Regarding IDLO's sixth strategic objective (healthy lives and well-being for all), the Director-General highlighted IDLO's partnership with the World Health Organization on the Global Regulatory & Fiscal Capacity Building Programme (Global RECAP), which seeks to strengthen approaches to non-communicable diseases and has been extended to Ghana, Indonesia, Nepal, Mauritius and Thailand. She also drew attention to a new initiative in Tunisia, in partnership with government and civil society, to enhance access to legal aid and health services for migrants.
42. Turning to IDLO's Organizational Enablers, the Director-General highlighted several important investments made by IDLO in innovation, human resources, systems, and processes, to better deliver on the Organization's mandate.
43. Under the first enabler – innovation, integration, and impact – the Director-General highlighted the ongoing transition from a project-based implementation model to a more integrated and programmatic approach,

which has included developing pilot country strategies for several countries of operation, including Burkina Faso, Somalia, Tunisia and Uganda. Referring to the importance of data, she also noted the development of IDLO's first comprehensive Data and Knowledge Management Strategy.

44. Highlighting that IDLO's staff is its most valuable asset (enabler 2 is focused on investing in people), the Director-General informed the Assembly of a number of initiatives, including strengthening IDLO's ethics framework by introducing a new Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and updating the Policy on the Prohibition of Sexual Harassment; the introduction of a Values and Behaviours Framework to strengthen performance management; and the Standing Committee's approval of her proposal to increase paid maternity leave from 16 to 20 weeks and paternity leave from 2 to 6 weeks.
45. In terms of improving systems and processes (enabler 3), the Director-General highlighted the integration of IDLO's Human Resource Management System with the payroll system; the strengthening of finance and procurement systems and the upgrade of ICT infrastructure. She reaffirmed her commitment to security risk management, which remains a top priority, given that much of IDLO's work takes place in fragile and conflict-affected regions. In this context, she expressed gratitude to the Director-General of FAO for enabling her to participate in the senior UN Security Management Team, a valuable source of support for IDLO.
46. On the subject of IDLO's ongoing efforts to secure proper recognition of IDLO's legal status as an intergovernmental organization, generally through the negotiation of Host Country Agreements (HCAs), the Director-General mentioned that in January 2024 IDLO's HCA with Ukraine came into force and in June the Bahamas enacted legislation implementing its HCA with IDLO. Noting that negotiations are ongoing with a number of other countries including The Gambia, the Philippines, and Moldova, she took the opportunity to thank Member Parties, in particular the United States, for their ongoing support on this matter.
47. Finally, the Director-General drew attention to the area of strengthening partnerships (enabler 4), describing it as one of her priorities, and highlighted examples of how IDLO had strengthened its engagement during the past year with current and prospective partners.
48. She reported on her participation at the Italy-Africa Summit at the invitation of the Italian President of the Council of Ministers, which provided a valuable opportunity to engage with Ministers and high-level representatives from Italy and African states, as well as to showcase IDLO's capacity development work across Africa, and how the rule of law could contribute to Italy's Mattei Plan for Africa.
49. She referenced the meetings she had held throughout the year with numerous high-level Italian officials, and with Ambassadors and representatives of IDLO's Member Parties, in Rome, Geneva and New York, as well as several high-level visits to IDLO headquarters that were organized for delegations

from the ASEAN Committee in Rome, Chile, The Gambia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Uruguay, and the Justice Commission of the Berlin Parliament.

50. The Director-General also drew attention to IDLO's participation in the third annual US-IDLO Strategic Dialogue in Washington D.C., which provided an important platform to engage with stakeholders from across the U.S. government. She also noted IDLO's strengthened collaboration with the United Nations system through bilateral engagement and cooperation with UN entities, including the UN Secretariat, FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNEP, UNHCR, UNICRI, UNODC, UN Women, WFP, and WHO on programming, research, and policy advocacy.
51. Finally, the Director-General referred to the request received earlier in the year from the Republic of Uruguay to join IDLO, and confirmed that the request had been approved by the Assembly.
52. Turning to policy advocacy, the Director-General highlighted the successful organization of IDLO's flagship event - the SDG 16 Conference - which was held for the first time in New York and opened by H.E. the President of the Republic of Italy. She also highlighted that once again, at the request of Italy, the key messages from the Conference were shared by the Secretary General with all UN Member States.
53. The Director-General also reported that she was invited by the ECOSOC President to moderate the official HLPF Review session on "SDG 16 and its Interlinkages with Other SDGs - Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions", and IDLO also organized a side event entitled "Game-changing Rule of Law Solutions", featuring insights from IDLO's partners on the benefits of investing in rule of law.
54. The Director-General reported that IDLO had advocated throughout the year for greater political and financial support for the rule of law in several other important forums, including the 33rd Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna; the Human Rights Council in Geneva; and the OECD Global Roundtable on Access to Justice, hosted by Canada.
55. She highlighted IDLO's partnership with the World Bank as one of the co-hosts of the Bank's inaugural Global Forum on Justice and Rule of Law in Washington, D.C., where she met with senior leaders, including the General Counsel and the Director of Governance Practice, to discuss potential collaboration.
56. She noted that, in 2024, IDLO was granted Permanent Observer status at the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and had participated in the 10th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Yerevan, strengthening collaboration with parliamentarians and youth leaders worldwide.
57. Turning to management updates, the Director-General mentioned the challenging task IDLO had faced following a fraud in a country office.

Affirming her commitment to the highest standards of transparency and accountability, she reported that IDLO had commissioned a thorough investigation, including a forensic audit by an external firm. To strengthen oversight, additional safeguards were implemented and an independent assessment of internal financial controls commissioned. Throughout the process, the Director-General underlined that IDLO had coordinated closely with the donor and had regularly updated the Audit and Finance Committee and the Standing Committee.

58. The Director-General noted that IDLO's financial results for 2024 were in line with previous years, and she was pleased to report that unrestricted revenue exceeded forecasts thanks to increased contributions from Italy and the United States.
59. The Director-General expressed her appreciation to the Member Parties providing financial support to IDLO, underlining the importance of core contributions, which enable IDLO to strengthen systems, invest in staff, and promote innovation and, she encouraged all Members to consider contributing.
60. The Director-General concluded her report by saying she looked forward to embarking on the next strategic cycle, with the continued support of IDLO's Member Parties, and with the clear goal of achieving a world where the rule of law serves as a catalyst for peace, justice, and inclusion.
61. The full text of the Director-General's statement to the Assembly is attached to this summary and available online [at this link](#).
62. The President thanked the Director-General for her report and commended IDLO for its achievements during the past year under her leadership.

#### **GENERAL DEBATE**

63. The President then opened the general debate, inviting Member Parties to take the floor.
64. The Assembly heard interventions by the representatives of Afghanistan, Austria, China, Ecuador, Honduras, Italy, Mongolia, Montenegro, Mali, the Netherlands, OPEC Fund, the Philippines, Peru, Sudan, Sweden, Türkiye, the United States, and Vietnam.
65. The full text of all statements delivered at the Assembly and subsequently shared with the IDLO Secretariat are available online [at this link](#).
66. In their interventions, Member Parties commended the Director-General for her leadership of the Organization and commitment to promoting the rule of law worldwide and thanked her for her detailed report.
67. They welcomed IDLO's progress in achieving its six strategic objectives and expressed support for IDLO's programmatic work across different areas, including access to justice, inclusive economic development, anti-corruption,

and gender equality, among others, and commended the Organization for continuing to operate in extremely complex contexts, such as Afghanistan, the Sahel and Ukraine.

68. Members encouraged IDLO to continue strengthening its partnerships as a way to increase impact, and to keep engaging with a wide range of organizations, in particular with the Rome-based agencies.
69. Highlighting growing pressure on development budgets, Members acknowledged IDLO's ability to make the most of available resources to produce tangible results. They also emphasized the importance of broadening IDLO's donor base and advocating for increased funding for the rule of law.
70. Members expressed appreciation for the vision and the outcomes contained in IDLO's proposed Strategic Plan 2025-2028 and welcomed its approach.
71. The Director-General thanked the representatives who intervened for their kind words and expressions of support for IDLO's staff, in particular those working in challenging environments. The Director-General assured Members that she would share their messages of encouragement with colleagues, and that IDLO would follow up on the areas of interest referenced in Member Parties' statements.

**AGENDA ITEM 3: STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2028, MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025-2026, and OPERATING BUDGET 2025 (AP/2024/3.1, AP/2024/3.3, AP/2024/3.4)**

72. The President introduced the agenda item by drawing attention to the background documents: the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2028 (AP/2024/3.1), draft Management Plan 2025-2026 (AP/2024/3.3) and the draft Operating Budget for 2025 (AP/2024/3.4).
73. He noted that the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2028, the draft Management Plan 2025-2026 and the draft Operating Budget 2025 had been reviewed and endorsed by the Standing Committee at its meeting on 29 October and that the draft Operating Budget for 2025 had been reviewed by the Audit and Finance Committee and recommended for approval by the Standing Committee.
74. The President then gave the floor to the Director-General to present the documents.
75. The Director-General began by underlining that the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2028 prioritizes IDLO's approach to people-centred justice and aims to help build more accountable justice systems.
76. She recalled the broad consultations that informed the drafting of the Plan, involving a wide range of stakeholder groups, notably IDLO's Member Parties, as well as officials of other international organizations including Rome-based agencies, parliamentarians, regional organizations, civil society and academia.

77. She presented some of the key trends that emerged from the consultations, including rule of law in recession; conflict and fragility on the rise; growing inequality; slow and uneven response to the climate crisis; the promises and perils of technology; widening of the gender gap; polarization and lack of public trust; and a contested global order, all of which underline the need for integrated justice solutions.
78. The Director-General recalled IDLO's vision, namely: a world in which every person lives in dignity and equality under the rule of law. She also referred to IDLO's mission to champion people-centred justice and promote the rule of law to advance sustainable development and help build more peaceful, inclusive and resilient societies.
79. She highlighted the values that will continue to guide IDLO's work in the next strategic cycle, namely: sustainability, a people-centred approach, gender equality, local ownership, human rights, legal pluralism, transparency and accountability, and partnerships.
80. Introducing the substantive components of the Strategic Plan 2025-2028, the Director-General described the Plan's new overarching Strategic Goal: the rule of law accelerates progress towards peace and sustainable development, the six main outcomes, and details of how IDLO plans to achieve the objectives over the next two years under the 2025-2026 Management Plan.
81. The Director-General described how the objectives under the Plan will be pursued through the following five levers of change: legal and policy reform; strengthening institutional capacity; digital solutions; participatory governance; and legal empowerment.
82. She went on to briefly describe the six outcomes of the Plan, namely: the expansion of access to justice; the enhancement of public integrity and anti-corruption efforts; reduction of the justice gap for women and girls; accelerated action on climate and environmental governance; the promotion of enabling environments for inclusive economic growth; and the enhancement of legal and policy frameworks to reduce health inequalities.
83. Regarding the thematic and geographic distribution of IDLO programming for 2025, the Director-General presented an overview of the forecast, highlighting that access to justice would represent the largest share of IDLO's work thematically, while the African continent would continue to account for around half of IDLO programming.
84. The Director-General emphasized the importance of continuing to mobilize political and financial support for the rule of law, through stronger partnerships, policy advocacy, resource mobilization efforts, and communications.
85. Finally, the Director-General outlined the main areas where IDLO intends to invest to strengthen the Organization's capacities, namely through increased focus on quality, evidence-based research and results by enhancing IDLO's integrated approach to programmes, research and advocacy; continued investment in people; and improvements in systems and processes by

leveraging technology, upgrading ICT systems, and enhancing internal communications and knowledge management.

86. Referring to the Management Plan 2025-2026, the Director-General underlined how the Management Plan aims to develop a diverse and thematically balanced portfolio of programmes, research, and advocacy to maximize IDLO's contribution to peacebuilding and sustainable development.
87. Turning to the proposed Operating Budget for 2025, the Director-General recalled that the Budget had first been considered and endorsed by the Audit and Finance Committee and then reviewed and approved by the Standing Committee. She noted that the Budget had been prepared bearing in mind the need to balance caution with ambition within a rapidly evolving environment.
88. The Director-General concluded by saying that IDLO's Strategic Plan 2025-2028 emphasizes the rule of law as a practical means to address some of the world's most pressing challenges, through an evidence-based approach that ensures effective and sustainable interventions. She added that it was hoped the Plan would further solidify IDLO's role as a global leader in promoting justice and resilient societies.
89. The President thanked the Director-General for her presentation of the three key documents. He then opened the floor for other interventions from Member Parties.
90. Representatives of Sweden and the United States took the floor to express their appreciation and support for the Strategic Plan 2025-2028 and Management Plan 2025-2026.
91. Concluding the agenda item, the President drew attention to the draft Resolution 1/2024, endorsing the proposed Strategic Plan 2025-2028, which had been shared with Member Parties in advance of the meeting.
92. Noting there were no objections or additional comments from Member Parties, the President declared Resolution 1/2024 (AP/2024/3.2) adopted by consensus.
93. He then drew attention to Resolution 2/2024 approving the Management Plan 2025-2026 and Operating Budget 2025, a draft of which had been shared in advance with members. Noting there were no objections or additional comments from Member Parties, the President declared Resolution 2/2024 (AP/2024/3.5) adopted by consensus.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 4: REPORTS OF THE GOVERNING BODIES**

##### **REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE (AP/2024/4.1)**

94. The President presented the Report of the Standing Committee (AP/2024/4.1), which had been circulated in advance to Member Parties, sharing a summary of the report's main highlights from the three meetings held by the Committee during 2024.

95. Firstly, he thanked other Members of the Committee - the two Vice Presidents, Italy and Mongolia, and the *ad hoc* members Egypt, Kuwait, Paraguay and the Philippines - for their active participation and contributions throughout the year.
96. The President expressed appreciation for the Director-General's reports to the Standing Committee, and for the progress registered on the implementation of the fourth and final year of IDLO's Strategic Plan, the second year of the Management Plan for 2023-2024, and the Operating Budget.
97. The President highlighted that a key priority for the Standing Committee in 2024 had been contributing to the development of IDLO's newly approved Strategic Plan for 2025-2028, through a dedicated consultation in April, a briefing by the Director-General in July, and a detailed presentation of the draft Plan at the Standing Committee meeting in October.
98. He drew attention to some of the highlights included in the Director-General's reports to the Standing Committee, including IDLO's work to continue delivering effective justice solutions in complex and often fragile contexts, such as Afghanistan, Ukraine, and the Sahel.
99. He welcomed IDLO's participation as an observer to the G7 Anti-Corruption Task Force for Ukraine and the Organization's growing body of work on anti-corruption in diverse contexts, including The Bahamas, Guatemala, Honduras, Mongolia, and Ukraine.
100. He further highlighted IDLO's extensive efforts to advance gender equality, through the elimination of discriminatory laws and combating gender-based violence.
101. Noting that the year had not been without its challenges, the President also referred to the briefings provided by the Director-General on the misappropriation of funds in an IDLO country office, describing the actions taken by IDLO as a reflection of the Organization's strong commitment to accountability, transparency and improvement.
102. The President concluded by summarizing the key decisions taken by the Standing Committee during 2024, which included: approval of the audited Financial Statements for 2023; endorsement of IDLO's Strategic Plan 2025-2028, now endorsed by the Assembly; approval of the Draft Management Plan 2025-2026 and Operating Budget for 2025; approval of an amendment to IDLO's employee rules to increase maternity and paternity leave; and review and approval of the other resolutions before the Assembly.

#### **REPORT OF THE AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE (AP/2024/4.2)**

103. The President then drew attention to the Audit and Finance Committee report to the Assembly for 2024 (AP/2024/4.2) and passed the floor to the AFC Chair, Ms. Eman Alabdulrazzaq, Acting Deputy Director of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, to present the Committee's report.

104. The AFC Chair thanked other members of the Committee – representatives of China, Italy, Kenya, Türkiye and the United States – for their active participation and contributions to the meetings held by the Committee in 2024.
105. Ms. Alabdulrazzaq reported that during the year the Committee carefully reviewed the financial reports and updates prepared by the Secretariat, in particular the audited financial statements, which were approved with no issues being raised.
106. She highlighted the Committee’s careful review of the proposed Operating Budget for 2025, noting that it was a balanced budget and deemed suitable for the implementation of the first year of IDLO’s Management Plan for 2025-2026.
107. The Chair further noted that the Committee had been regularly briefed on developments related to the misappropriation of funds in a country office, and the prompt response and actions taken by IDLO to address the situation, including the adoption of financial controls to prevent any recurrence as well as the commissioning of an independent risk analysis by an international firm of auditors.
108. The Chair reported that the Committee recognized IDLO’s transparent response and commitment to improving internal controls, further enhancing a culture of accountability.
109. The President thanked the AFC Chair for her presentation. There being no comments from the floor on either of the governing body reports, the President moved to the next agenda item.

**AGENDA ITEM 5: REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ADVISERS (AP/2024/5.1)**

110. The President drew attention to the Board of Advisers report to the Assembly for 2024 (AP/2024/5.1) and passed the floor to the Chair of the Board, Mr. Stefano Manservisi.
111. The Board Chair referred to the in-person meeting of the Board of Advisers, which he had chaired on 13 and 14 June 2024 at IDLO headquarters, which had focused mainly on consultations with the Board members regarding IDLO’s new Strategic Plan 2025-2028.
112. He noted that Board members had highlighted the importance of several thematic areas, which he noted were included in the new Plan, namely artificial intelligence, customary and informal justice, and climate.
113. The Chair acknowledged with gratitude IDLO’s work in challenging contexts, such as Afghanistan, the Sahel and Ukraine, and, on behalf of the Board, he expressed strong support for IDLO to continue providing such assistance.
114. The Chair commended IDLO’s progress in strengthening partnerships with other actors in the international system and with regional bodies, including

ASEAN and the EU. Referring to the latter, the Chair also underlined the important milestone of IDLO having successfully completed its EU pillar assessment, suggesting IDLO could also consider leveraging the opportunity of the launch of IDLO's new Strategic Plan 2025-2028 to enhance the Organization's profile in Brussels.

115. On expanding IDLO's membership, the Chair noted that Board members had encouraged IDLO to attract some of the key players from the Global South, in addition to members of the G7.
116. On the subject of funding, the Board had suggested looking further into the opportunities of private sector funding, including think tanks and major law firms.
117. The Board had commended IDLO's work on inclusive economic development, in particular through the Investment Support Programme for LDCs, a programme funded by the European Union, which the Chair had been pleased to facilitate in its initial stages.
118. The Chair commended IDLO for its new Strategic Plan 2025-2028, describing it as a comprehensive roadmap for the Organization's work in the coming years and he expressed full support for the Plan on behalf of the Board of Advisers.
119. Noting that he was ending his term on the Board of Advisers, the Chair took the opportunity to thank the Director-General for her leadership and the support provided to him over the past years as Chair of the Board of Advisers.
120. Finally, he offered warm praise for IDLO's staff in Rome and across the globe for their dedication and thanked his fellow Board members for their collaboration and support to the Organization.
121. The President thanked the Chair for his presentation and for his valuable service and contributions to the work of IDLO.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6: ELECTIONS**

122. The President opened the agenda item by summarizing the elections scheduled to take place, namely:
  - The election of two Member Parties to serve as *ad hoc* members of the Standing Committee;
  - The election of a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of four (4) Member Parties to serve as members of the Audit and Finance Committee; and
  - The election of at least three (3) and up to seven (7) members of the Board of Advisers for four-year terms.
123. He drew attention to the relevant documents on elections that were circulated prior to the meeting: Note Verbale 350/24 and related background note AP/2024/B1; and Note Verbale 351/24 and related background note AP/2024/B2.

**ELECTION OF AD HOC MEMBERS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
(ADOPTION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 3/2024) (AP/2024/6.1)**

124. The President introduced the election, noting that there were two vacancies arising from the end of the terms of Egypt and Paraguay. He further noted that Egypt had expressed interest in continuing to serve on the Committee, and Honduras had submitted its candidacy as a new member of the Standing Committee.
125. Noting that there were no additional expressions of interest or objections from Member Parties, the President declared Egypt and Honduras elected by consensus to serve as members of the Standing Committee for two-year terms, ending in November 2026.
126. Resolution 3/2024 (AP/2024/6.1), recording the result of the elections to the Standing Committee, was adopted by consensus. The President expressed congratulations to Egypt on its re-election and congratulated Honduras on its election as a new member of the Standing Committee.

**ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE  
(ADOPTION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 4/2024) (AP/2024/6.2)**

127. Since the United States had indicated its interest in standing for re-election to the Audit and Finance Committee, this election was presided over by Vice President *ex-officio*, Italy.
128. The representative of Italy introduced the election, recalling that the Committee was currently composed of six members, and that the terms of three of the members - China, Kenya and the United States - were expiring. She further reported that all three had expressed interest in continuing to serve on the Committee.
129. Noting that there were no additional expressions of interest or objections from Member Parties, she declared China, Kenya and the United States elected by consensus to serve as members of the Audit and Finance Committee for additional two-year terms, expiring in November 2026.
130. Resolution 4/2024 (AP/2024/6.2), recording the result of the elections to the Audit and Finance Committee, was adopted by consensus. The Vice-President expressed congratulations to the re-elected members and passed the floor back to the President to resume chairing the meeting.

**APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF ADVISERS  
(ADOPTION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 5/2024) (AP/2024/6.3)**

131. The President recalled that, because five members were concluding their terms on the Board, the Assembly needed to appoint at least three and up to seven members. He noted that three nominations had been received for members of the Board and that information regarding the following candidates had been shared with Members:

- H.E. Mehmet Hasan Göğüş (nomination by Türkiye for a second term);
  - Dr. Hoang Ly Anh (nomination by Vietnam for a second term);
  - Prof. Carlo Alberto Giusti (nomination by Italy for a first term).
132. The President asked if there was consensus among the Member Parties to appoint the individuals nominated. Hearing no objections, the President declared Mr. Carlo Alberto Giusti appointed for a first term and confirmed the re-appointment of H.E. Mehmet Hasan Göğüş and Dr. Hoang Ly Anh for their second terms as members of the Board of Advisers.
133. Resolution 5/2024 (AP/2024/6.3), recording the result of the appointment, was adopted by consensus. The President requested the Secretariat to notify the individuals concerned and to provide any information they might need in relation to their membership on the Board.
134. The President concluded by expressing thanks to the outgoing Members and, in particular, to the Chair, Mr. Manservisi, for their contributions to the Organization during the past four years.
135. At this point, the representative of Italy requested the floor and, echoing the words of the President, expressed warm thanks to Mr. Manservisi for his dedication and contribution to IDLO during his mandate as Chair of the Board, and also underlined the essential role played by the Board of Advisers in sharing their expertise and providing guidance to the Organization. She also took the opportunity to congratulate the newly appointed members of the Board.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

136. No Member Parties raised any issues under this agenda item.
137. The President thanked the Member Parties for their active participation and continued commitment to IDLO's mandate. He congratulated the newly elected members of IDLO's governing bodies and Board of Advisers. He thanked IDLO's Director-General, her leadership team, and staff around the world for their hard work during challenging times.
138. Finally, he reminded Member Parties to join the afternoon session of the Assembly for the Partnership Forum discussion on "Rule of Law Solutions for a Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Future: IDLO's Strategic Plan 2025-2028".
139. The President then declared the session of the Assembly closed.

**ENDS/**



**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION**  
**STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, MS JAN BEAGLE**

**Report of the Director-General to the Assembly of Parties**

Rome, 26 November 2024

Your Excellency Vice Minister Cirielli,  
Mr. President,  
Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues, and Friends,

It is a pleasure to present my report for 2024 to the Assembly.

I am grateful to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for hosting us, and I am especially grateful to the Vice Minister for joining us during such a busy week.

This year marks the culmination of IDLO's 2021-2024 Strategic Plan—a journey that has been both challenging and rewarding.

We developed the Plan in 2020, the first year of my first term, which coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, a period of unprecedented disruption and uncertainty.

Since then, the world has experienced a cruel and continuing storm of crises that have jeopardized and, in some cases, reversed hard won progress on sustainable development.

Major violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, and especially failure to protect civilians, are becoming a shockingly regular feature of modern conflict.

We see this across the world, including in Gaza and the West Bank, Haiti, Sudan and Ukraine.

The World Justice Project recorded its seventh consecutive global decline in the rule of law this year, in what is becoming a sustained rule of law recession.

Yet despite all of this, I remain optimistic, and resolute in the belief that the rule of law can drive positive change and help build a more peaceful, just, and sustainable future.

Over the past four years, IDLO has supported our partners to adapt and respond in the face of crises.

Our integrated approach, combining programming, research and policy advocacy, has helped position IDLO as a prominent champion of SDG 16 and the rule of law.

We have worked to make justice systems more people-centred, addressing barriers to access, and enhancing the capacity of institutions to deliver justice effectively and inclusively.

Between 2021 and 2023, IDLO empowered 150,000 justice seekers, supported nearly 600 legal reform efforts, and built the capacity of over 16,000 justice officials worldwide.

The majority of this work was carried out in fragile and conflict affected settings, including Afghanistan, the Sahel, Somalia and Ukraine.

We worked to reduce the justice gap for women and girls, and advanced innovations in justice delivery, from customary and informal mechanisms to digital solutions.

We leveraged the contribution of the rule of law to promote inclusive economic development, climate justice, food security and the sustainable use of natural resources, and healthy lives and well-being.

Our research highlighted rule of law approaches for addressing key development challenges and made the case for greater engagement and investment in justice systems.

IDLO engaged actively in multilateral forums including the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, the Commission on the Status of Women, the High-Level Political Forum, and the Conference of the Parties to the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change, and numerous other meetings to keep the rule of law high on the global policy agenda.

My optimism is based on what we have accomplished together.

And while there can be no room for complacency, it is important to acknowledge what we have been able to achieve.

In the face of extreme adversity, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that positive change is happening.

Despite the challenging environment for multilateral cooperation, world leaders came together at the Summit of the Future, in September, to agree on the steps needed to promote a multilateral system that is fit for the future.

The Pact for the Future is a culmination of a four-year process of consultations and negotiations, in which IDLO played an active role.

In the Plenary of the Summit, I welcomed the many references to the rule of law and human rights in the Pact, the Global Digital Compact and the Declaration on Future Generations, while emphasizing the importance of turning these commitments into action.

Earlier this month, I had the pleasure of seeing an inspiring example in Moldova, which has been implementing ambitious reforms in its justice sector to combat corruption, enhance judicial independence, and strengthen institutions.

IDLO has been present in Moldova since 2018.

We are promoting the use of commercial mediation to alleviate caseloads, supporting the Independent Anti-Corruption Advisory Committee in analysing systemic corruption, and assisting the Extraordinary Prosecutor Vetting Commission, which is conducting independent evaluations of the ethical and financial integrity of prosecutors and senior officials.

These reforms are essential for integration with the European Union, an aspiration confirmed by Moldova's referendum just a few weeks ago.

While in Chisinau, I was pleased to launch a major new programme, which aims to enhance the efficiency of the justice sector, promote public trust, and empower civil society to monitor corruption by advancing digitalization, transparency, and civic engagement.

I also met with key stakeholders, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Justice, as well as development partners, to deepen our collaboration.

Throughout my report to the Assembly, are examples of how IDLO's partners are using rule of law solutions to address critical challenges and accelerate progress on sustainable development.

They would not have been possible without the support of our partners, and the dedication and ingenuity of IDLO colleagues around the world, for which I am sincerely grateful.

Today I will highlight major developments under the Strategic Objectives and Organizational Enablers of the Strategic Plan over the past year.

### **Empowering Justice Seekers**

An important element in IDLO's approach to people-centred justice is empowering justice seekers to claim their rights.

Under the first strategic objective, we engage with people and communities to increase legal awareness and provide legal aid, and advisory services.

This is particularly important in crisis or transitional contexts where justice seekers most need the protection of the law.

Despite challenges posed by narrowing public space, and increased scrutiny from the de facto authorities, IDLO has maintained operations in Afghanistan.

Our focus remains on supporting justice seekers, especially women and vulnerable groups, through non-state service providers and community justice systems.

IDLO's Afghanistan Rule of Law Observatory tracks legal developments and offers an e-learning platform with free courses in Dari and Pashto to equip non-state justice actors with essential skills.

This platform, accessible even with limited internet, is particularly valuable for women facing restrictions on movement and access to opportunities.

IDLO expanded its network to over 120 female lawyers and assistants and facilitated dialogues among lawyers and students to support them in their efforts to address Gender Based Violence in their communities.

IDLO has also carried out quarterly mappings of justice sector Civil Society Organizations in Afghanistan to assess the number of organizations actively delivering legal services, and the challenges they face.

To support their efforts, IDLO has awarded grants to organizations across various provinces in Afghanistan, further strengthening local capacity to provide essential legal services.

I am pleased to report that IDLO will be able to continue this engagement until mid-2025 following an extension of our current programme. I am prioritizing efforts to secure further funding for this critical work.

IDLO's subregional programme in the Sahel seeks to strengthen public engagement with the criminal justice chain in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger through the promotion of fair trial and human rights standards, with a focus on local priorities.

In Niger, for instance, IDLO supported awareness caravans in Tillabéri and Dosso to promote knowledge of rights in the criminal justice system.

These initiatives reached some 12,000 individuals, half of whom were women and girls, providing valuable information on local issues and available legal remedies.

IDLO also supported the convening of criminal proceedings, reducing the backlog of cases, and addressing prolonged pre-trial detention.

While the region remains highly volatile, IDLO programming, initially set to conclude in August 2024, has been extended to June 2025.

In Uganda, IDLO enhanced access to justice for marginalized communities in remote areas, addressing emerging conflicts among herders, farmers, and investors regarding land use and ownership.

In collaboration with partners, we provided legal aid services to over 9000 vulnerable individuals, more than half of whom were women.

We will be hearing more about this work from the CEO of Uganda's Association of Women Lawyers – FIDA Uganda, at the Partnership Forum this afternoon.

A key aspect of our work involves engagement with Customary and Informal Justice systems, which serve as the primary means of dispute resolution for most people worldwide.

We work to promote reforms that increase respect for human rights and protection for women, youth, and vulnerable groups.

In March, we supported the judiciary of Uganda in hosting the Africa Judiciaries' Summit on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), to explore the effectiveness of ADR methods in improving access to justice across the region.

The Summit brought together Chief Justices from over ten countries, including Benin, Eswatini, The Gambia, Namibia, Somalia, and South Sudan.

We published an issue brief on delivering people-centred justice in Somalia, highlighting Alternative Dispute Resolution Centres, established with IDLO support.

The centres provide free, locally legitimate dispute resolution through mediation, arbitration, Xeer, and Sharia norms, aligned with international standards.

We highlighted the importance of engagement and investment with customary and informal systems in many forums, including the Knowledge Platform for Security and Rule of Law's Annual Conference, held this month in Dakar.

### **Making Laws and Institutions Work for People**

Building strong, accountable, and inclusive institutions is fundamental to advancing the rule of law.

We recognize that laws and institutions must be built around the needs of the communities they serve.

IDLO's efforts have focused on legal reforms, capacity-building, and fostering effective partnerships to enhance justice delivery.

In The Gambia, for instance, our work to support judicial reforms, including capacity-building for magistrates and judges, has strengthened the judiciary's ability to deliver fair and timely justice.

In 2024, we supported the judiciary's evaluation of its Strategic Plan to assess progress and identify key areas for improvement.

To complement these efforts, we facilitated a study visit to Nigeria, where Gambian judges observed the Nigerian court reporting system.

Based on this visit, the Chief Justice of The Gambia approved the implementation of a similar system.

This initiative, which launches as a pilot programme, is set to improve record-keeping and reduce case backlogs in two High Courts and a Magistrate Court.

We are very pleased to have the Minister of Justice of the Gambia here with us today and we look forward to his insights on Gambia's ongoing reforms during the Partnership Forum.

IDLO has an ongoing partnership with the Philippines to strengthen the capacity of the criminal justice system.

Over the past year, we organized exposure visits to the United States and Italy, for officials from the Supreme Court and the Philippines Judicial Academy, to explore effective judicial education methodologies and court management practices.

We also conducted training sessions on prosecuting money laundering cases, in collaboration with the Department of Justice and the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

In the Bahamas we built prosecutorial capacity in case preparation and the presentation of forensic evidence, and we enhanced clinical legal education in North Macedonia.

IDLO's Global Corrections Programme concluded in March, following the development of a curriculum to integrate human rights principles into penitentiary management.

The programme has generated interest from Costa Rica and Guatemala and has fostered the establishment of a network of Latin American prison officials.

We partner with countries to address challenges such as illicit financial flows.

In Somalia, IDLO supported efforts to strengthen the Anti-Money Laundering and Countering the Financing of Terrorism system by drafting regulations, preparing reports for the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force, and assisting the Financial Reporting Center and Somaliland Bank.

These efforts led to Somalia's first list of sanctioned individuals for terrorist financing and the forwarding of 232 cases to the Attorney General's Office, resulting in significant convictions, including the first civilian conviction for terrorism financing.

We also continued supporting the implementation of measures to enhance justice delivery through digital innovation.

In Honduras, for instance, IDLO installed software for anonymizing judicial sentences.

IDLO is increasingly implementing subregional approaches to address transnational issues.

Under the East Africa Transnational Organized Crime programme, we have partnered with Kenya, Mozambique, and Tanzania to strengthen their capacities to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate transnational organized crime.

Common regional challenges include weak enforcement of legal frameworks; limited capacity to respond to corruption; illicit financial flows; asset forfeiture and recovery; and inadequate cross-border coordination.

In 2024, we conducted an independent legal assessment of policies and frameworks related to transnational crime in the three countries, supported targeted capacity development for justice officials, and promoted regional dialogue and coordination.

IDLO also supported efforts to combat trafficking in persons (TIP) and strengthen justice systems in the Mano River Basin in West Africa.

In Liberia, we continued our longstanding support by conducting a justice chain analysis to improve the handling of Trafficking cases and facilitated a high-level dialogue on strengthening the response to Trafficking in Persons.

In Sierra Leone, we helped develop the National Action Plan on TIP, aligning it with national and regional frameworks.

And in Côte d'Ivoire, IDLO signed an MOU with the government and is collaborating closely with partners to strengthen national capacity.

We also participated in the Iberoamérica Conference on International Legal Cooperation in Medellín, Colombia, which marked the 20th anniversary of the IberRed legal cooperation network.

IDLO continued to support Ukraine's accountability efforts as part of the Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group, providing technical assistance on international law, training prosecutors on crimes against children and sexual violence, and finalizing Action Plans for Law Enforcement Reform and Combating Torture.

We supported the establishment of the Coordination Centre for Victim and Witness Protection and developed procedures to enhance coordination among justice actors.

At the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Berlin, we emphasized the critical role of the rule of law in advancing reforms and preparing for reconstruction efforts.

Anti-corruption reform remains a major area of support in Ukraine, with a focus on strengthening ethics for justice sector officials.

This year we partnered with the High Council of Justice to develop standardized indicators for evaluating judges and judicial candidates and recommended amendments to the Code of Judicial Ethics.

In October, IDLO presented to the Office of the Prosecutor General a comprehensive analysis of the prosecution service with recommendations for improving operations and enhancing transparency and efficiency.

Anti-corruption is an important and growing part of our overall portfolio.

I have already mentioned our work in Moldova, which is informed by the lessons learned from our experience in Ukraine.

IDLO launched a new Judicial Engagement and Transparency project in Mongolia aimed at fostering effective and transparent relationships among citizens, civil society, media, and justice system actors.

Earlier this year, we organized a study tour to Switzerland for senior officials from Mongolia's Criminal Justice System, focusing on good practices in prosecution, asset recovery, and mutual cooperation procedures.

We are also supporting anti-corruption and public integrity initiatives in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Honduras, Guatemala, Peru and Ecuador.

IDLO participated as an observer in the second meeting of the G7 Anti-Corruption Working Group, launched this year under the Italian Presidency.

The Organization also became a member of the G7 Anti-corruption Task Force for Ukraine and participated in the Task Force's third expert meeting in Tokyo this month.

We also attended the 21st International Anti-Corruption Conference in Vilnius.

Magistrate Tartaglia Polcini, Italy's representative to the G7 and G20 Anti-corruption Groups, will join us this afternoon at the Partnership Forum to share his insights on the significance of international cooperation in the fight against corruption.

### **Reducing the Justice Gap for Women and Girls**

Achieving gender equality is central to IDLO's mission and a major priority for me as Director-General.

IDLO promotes gender equality and justice for women and girls as a standalone objective, as well as mainstreaming it throughout our work.

Our interventions help protect women's rights through the promotion of gender-responsive legal and policy frameworks; the elimination of discriminatory laws and practices; addressing gender-based violence; and the empowerment of women professionals in the justice sector.

During 2024, we launched a report on Strengthening Gender Equality in Law in Kenya, in partnership with UN Women and the Kenya Law Reform Commission.

This report evaluates Kenya's legal framework, identifies discriminatory laws, and provides recommendations for reform, following similar studies in the Philippines and Sierra Leone.

We are currently finalizing assessments for Mali and Burkina Faso.

Justice Singh from the Philippines' Supreme Court is here with us today and I look forward to benefitting from her experience later today at the Partnership Forum.

Today, on the second day of the 16 Days of Action against Gender-Based Violence, we reaffirm our commitment to promoting survivor-centred approaches to combatting this pervasive issue.

IDLO has again joined UN Women's UNITE to End Violence against Women initiative, launched under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General.

We are also working with our partners to promote these approaches at the national level.

In Tunisia, we assessed the implementation of the law on gender-based violence, validated findings in a workshop with Ministerial support, and provided training for 120 lawyers.

A study visit to the United States enabled judges and Ministry of Justice representatives to share experiences with international counterparts.

In Uganda, IDLO focused on improving the management of cases of sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children by the police force.

In Liberia, we strengthened the role of women in law enforcement through gender policy reviews of key agencies, and capacity-building initiatives, including training for women firefighters.

IDLO continued to contribute to policy advocacy on advancing gender equality.

By working at the intersection of SDG 5 and SDG 16, I believe that our approach can significantly advance gender equality, empower women, and accelerate progress toward achieving the 2030 Agenda.

At the Commission on the Status of Women, I stressed the urgency of eliminating legal and practical discrimination, closing the gender justice gap, and increasing funding for gender-responsive initiatives.

IDLO co-organized several events to highlight the connection between justice and gender equality.

We explored ways to empower women in customary and informal justice systems, focusing on creating gender-responsive environments with partners including the Philippines, Germany, and the Stand for Her Land Campaign.

We launched a report on Financing Women's Justice Needs, which emphasized the importance of aligning public spending and national budgets with women's justice priorities, particularly in addressing violence against women.

In collaboration with the Philippines, ILO, UNFCCC, and the World Bank, we discussed gender-responsive legal frameworks for just transitions, particularly in the context of climate change.

On International Women Judges Day, in a meeting in New York, chaired by Qatar, and co-organized with Indonesia, Morocco, Türkiye, and Saudi Arabia, I highlighted the essential role of women in judicial leadership and IDLO's efforts to strengthen their capacity across justice systems.

At the High-Level Political Forum, in an event on Gender Equality in Law, co-organized with UN Women, I issued a call to action to embrace a feminist approach to the rule of law.

During the High-Level Week of the General Assembly, I joined a discussion on "Learning from ASEAN" organized by Thailand and UN Women, to emphasize the urgent need for disaggregated data on gender and access to justice to shape effective national and regional strategies.

In anticipation of Beijing +30 next year, we have co-organized events with UNECE in Geneva and UNECA in Addis Ababa to foster regional consensus.

Having participated in the Beijing Conference myself, I am looking forward to actively engaging with events next year to accelerate the implementation of the commitments in the Beijing Platform for Action.

### **Inclusive economic development**

IDLO is committed to advancing enabling environments for inclusive economic development by strengthening laws and policies, enhancing state regulatory capacities, supporting dispute resolution, and promoting the economic empowerment of women and girls.

In Mongolia, IDLO supported revisions to the Law on Mediation and related frameworks.

We also organized a study visit to Italy for a delegation, from the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Court, and Parliament.

And in Jordan, we developed a comprehensive training handbook on insolvency law, which integrates national and international perspectives.

We also promote the use of ADR methods, including arbitration and mediation, for resolving commercial disputes fairly and expeditiously.

In Kyrgyzstan, we are facilitating readiness for the Singapore Convention through training, public outreach, and collaboration with the Supreme Court.

In Montenegro, we enhanced the ADR Centre, increasing mediation referrals, while in Uzbekistan, we reviewed legislation, developed tools, and launched public campaigns to support mediation processes.

Since its inception, our Investment Support Programme for Least Developed Countries (ISP/LDCs), a public/private partnership, has supported ten African LDCs in strengthening their investment frameworks.

In 2024, we assisted Liberia's National Investment Commission in drafting an amended concessions agreement through the Programme.

## **Climate Justice**

IDLO continues to champion rule-of-law approaches to climate action and justice, with a focus on gender equality, sustainable development, and the empowerment of vulnerable communities.

I recently returned from COP29 in Baku, where IDLO highlighted the critical role of the rule of law in advancing climate action.

It was a valuable opportunity to meet with representatives of Member States, international organizations and civil society.

During the high-level segment, I emphasized the importance of fair and gender-responsive legal and regulatory frameworks, and empowering vulnerable communities to drive effective climate action.

I also participated in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Parliamentary Meeting, which brought together hundreds of parliamentarians from all regions.

I drew attention to the role of the rule of law in protecting vulnerable populations and building trust to tackle climate challenges effectively.

In collaboration with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and other partners, we participated in events on addressing gender-based violence linked to climate challenges, and the role of courts in climate action.

While the outcome of COP29, particularly on climate finance, is less ambitious than many had hoped, it provides a foundation on which to build.

The focus must now be on implementation with an emphasis on women and girls – climate change is not gender neutral – and other vulnerable groups.

Throughout the year, IDLO continued to support countries to implement rule of law approaches to climate action.

In Kenya, we spearheaded a community engagement initiative in Isiolo County, raising awareness about climate challenges and developing a localized action plan to enhance resilience and communication on climate issues.

In Rwanda, we developed a roadmap to strengthen decentralized land dispute resolution through the Abunzi, or traditional authorities, and provided training to mediators to improve dispute resolution on land issues.

At the SIDS4 Conference in Antigua and Barbuda, we emphasized the role of the rule of law in advancing climate justice, human rights, and equitable economic development.

We also hosted a side event with Vanuatu and UNEP on transformative climate action, and collaborated with Vanuatu in The Hague and New York to discuss the role of international courts in climate justice.

As International Gender Champions, the heads of our offices in Geneva, New York and the Hague and I joined the Geneva Pledge for Gender-Responsive Climate Action.

IDLO is committed to promoting sustainable food systems through a rule-of-law approach.

In Tunisia, we are addressing barriers to land and credit access for farmers, particularly women and youth, to enhance their participation in food supply chains and improve livelihoods.

Our assessments highlighted access to credit as the primary obstacle, underscoring the importance of secure land tenure for women.

In partnership with FAO, we published an issue brief that synthesizes research from 40 countries and the EU, offering actionable recommendations to protect food security during crises.

At the FAO Council, we emphasized the linkages between the food security crisis and human rights, and advocated for rule-of-law solutions.

At the Committee on World Food Security, IDLO provided input on reducing inequalities in food systems and advocated for gender equality, and inclusivity in decision-making.

As an advisor to the Group of Friends of the Right to Food, IDLO co-authored a policy brief for the Brazilian G20 Presidency.

We also contributed to discussions on minimizing the impact of climate change on the right to food at the Human Rights Council.

At the Africa Food Systems Forum in Kigali, we partnered with IDRC and the Rockefeller Foundation to co-sponsor a session on environmentally sustainable production, and access to healthy, affordable, and safe food.

## **Health**

IDLO continues to work at the intersection of health, sustainable development, and the rule of law to promote access to healthcare, pandemic preparedness, and capacity to manage diseases.

In Tunisia, we launched a new initiative, in partnership with government and civil society, to enhance access to legal aid and health services for migrants.

Under the second phase of the Global RECAP Programme, in collaboration with WHO, we extended support to Ghana, Indonesia, Nepal, Mauritius, and Thailand, strengthening gender-responsive approaches to non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

We supported civil society in Bangladesh, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Uganda with advocacy on NCDs and contributed to the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on NCD Prevention and Control.

Through partnerships with WHO and Georgetown University, we supported research and promoted inclusive, multisectoral approaches to building resilient health systems.

At the World Health Assembly and the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board, IDLO highlighted the importance of legal frameworks in addressing diseases, improving health security, and tackling the social determinants of health.

### **Organizational enablers**

Turning now to Organizational Enablers—key areas where we must invest in our capacities, systems, and resources.

These four enablers are critical to ensuring IDLO is well-positioned to effectively implement our Strategic Goals and Objectives.

### **Innovation, Integration, and Impact**

The first enabler promotes greater quality and innovation in our work, reinforcing IDLO's commitment to evidence-based approaches and measurable outcomes.

A key priority is IDLO's ongoing transition from a project-based implementation model to a more integrated and programmatic approach.

To achieve this, IDLO has developed pilot Country Strategies for Burkina Faso, Somalia, Tunisia, and Uganda.

These strategies, crafted through extensive consultations with national stakeholders, development partners, and other key actors, are rooted in evidence-based analysis.

By tailoring interventions to each country's unique context and needs, we are better equipped to deliver solutions that align with national priorities.

We continued data collection for the Strategic Results and Resources Framework (SRRF), which provided valuable insights into our operational and organizational achievements.

This strengthened focus on results-based management enhances our ability to measure progress, identify areas for improvement, and inform the development of future strategies.

Recognizing the importance of data, we have initiated the development of IDLO's first comprehensive Data and Knowledge Management Strategy.

## **Investing in people**

IDLO's people are our most valuable asset.

Our Human Resources Strategy focuses on attracting, and managing, a talented and motivated workforce, while ensuring that colleagues working in challenging environments receive the support they need.

In 2024, we strengthened our ethics framework by introducing a new Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and updating our Policy on the Prohibition of Sexual Harassment.

We have also introduced a Values and Behaviours Framework to strengthen performance management, and are updating our e-learning curriculum to better support our staff's professional development.

I am pleased to report that the Standing Committee has approved my proposal to increase paid maternity leave from 16 to 20 weeks and paternity leave from 2 to 6 weeks.

The organizational change management process continues with initiatives to strengthen staff engagement and teamwork in many departments and offices.

## **Systems and Processes**

Efficient systems and processes are essential for delivering on our mandate effectively.

Over the past strategic cycle, IDLO has invested in upgrading its operational systems and business processes to enhance transparency, and reduce inefficiencies.

A significant achievement has been the integration of our Human Resource Management System with the payroll system, improving data accuracy, compliance, and reporting capabilities.

IDLO has also strengthened its Finance and Procurement systems, introducing improved contract monitoring and an automated sanctions search platform.

We have implemented upgrades to our ICT infrastructure and the ongoing redesign of our website will enhance user experience and accessibility.

My commitment to security risk management remains a top priority, especially as much of our work takes place in fragile and insecure contexts.

Our Security Adviser is in close communication with IDLO's country offices, and Security Focal Persons have been identified and trained in key regions.

I am grateful to the Director-General of FAO for enabling me to participate as a member of the senior UN Security Management Team, which has provided us with valuable support.

### **Legal status**

Securing Host Country Agreements (HCAs) remains a key priority for IDLO, as these agreements underpin our operations, provide legal protections for our staff and facilities, and enable the efficient use of donor funds.

We have made significant progress in securing recognition of IDLO's legal status in countries of operation.

The Host Country Agreement with Ukraine came into force in January following parliamentary approval, and in June, the Bahamas enacted legislation implementing its HCA.

In Kenya, we are monitoring Cabinet approval of a recently negotiated HCA, which will enhance support for justice reforms.

Negotiations are also ongoing with The Gambia, the Philippines, and Moldova, while we continue to work toward finalizing the agreement with Tunisia.

These efforts ensure a stable legal framework for our mission, and I extend my gratitude to Member Parties, particularly the United States, for their ongoing support.

## **Strengthening Partnerships**

Strengthening IDLO's partnerships has been a major priority for me as Director General.

Collaborative partnerships enable IDLO to leverage diverse expertise, resources, and networks to address complex rule of law challenges more effectively.

By working with governments, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector, IDLO fosters shared ownership of justice initiatives and ensures that its programmes are tailored to local contexts.

Partnerships also enhance advocacy efforts, enabling IDLO to amplify its voice on global platforms and integrate rule of law principles into broader development agendas.

Over the past year, we strengthened our engagement with current and prospective partners.

In January, at the invitation of the President of the Council of Ministers, I attended the Italy-Africa Summit, where I highlighted IDLO's capacity development efforts and growing partnerships across Africa, and the ways in which the rule of law could contribute to the realization of the Mattei Plan.

The Summit provided opportunities to engage with Ministers and high-level representatives from Italy and African states.

During the year, I met with key Italian officials, including the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Director-General of the Development Cooperation Directorate, the Director of the Department of Information for Security, in her capacity as G7 Sherpa, and the Director of AICS, to discuss IDLO's initiatives and explore avenues for strengthened collaboration.

Throughout the year, I engaged with Ambassadors and representatives of IDLO's Member Parties in Rome, Geneva, and New York to thank them for their support and partnership.

We welcomed delegations to IDLO Headquarters from the ASEAN Committee in Rome, Chile, the Gambia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Uruguay, and the Berlin Parliament.

In June, I led our delegation to the 3rd annual US-IDLO Strategic Dialogue, which provided a valuable platform to engage with stakeholders from across the U.S. government to discuss shared priorities and explore opportunities for enhanced cooperation.

We continued to strengthen collaboration with the United Nations system through bilateral engagement and cooperation with UN entities, including the UN Secretariat, FAO, IFAD, ILO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNEP, UNHCR, UNICRI, UNODC, UN Women, WFP and WHO, on programming, research, and policy advocacy.

We also continued to strengthen our engagement with Rome-based Agencies.

IDLO's partnership agreement with FAO has been renewed as a basis for furthering our ongoing work at the intersection of the rule of law and food and nutrition.

In March, we hosted a negotiation skills training that brought together IDLO colleagues and legal officers from FAO, WFP, and IFAD.

In April, I met with the Director-General of ICCROM in Rome to explore potential synergies.

IDLO attended the 103rd session of the UNIDROIT Council and is finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding to further our cooperation.

In June, I was pleased to welcome IDLO's Board of Advisers to Rome for their annual meeting and to consult with them on the development of our new Strategic Plan.

I extend my gratitude to the Chair and all Board members for their support and insights.

During International Law Week in October, in partnership with the Italian Mission to the UN, we hosted a reception to raise IDLO's profile in New York.

I am pleased to report that, following a formal expression of interest by the Republic of Uruguay in joining IDLO, a request was circulated to Member Parties, and the accession of Uruguay to IDLO's Establishment Agreement has been approved by consensus.

### **Advocating for political and financial support for the rule of law**

We engaged in several major policy advocacy initiatives over the past year to further position IDLO as a thought leader and champion for SDG 16.

IDLO's flagship policy advocacy event is the SDG16 Conference, co-organized in partnership with the Government of Italy and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The Conference, held exceptionally in New York this year, was opened by H.E. the President of the Republic of Italy and the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, together with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and myself.

The discussions reaffirmed the strong link among peace, justice, the rule of law, and sustainable development, emphasizing the role of SDG16 as a critical enabler for the entire 2030 Agenda.

At the request of Italy, the key messages from the Conference were shared by the Secretary-General with all UN Member States.

Subsequently, I was invited by the President of ECOSOC to moderate the official HLPF Review session on “SDG 16 and its Interlinkages with Other SDGs – Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions”.

We organized a HLPF side event, on “Game-changing Rule of Law Solutions”, which featured insights from IDLO’s partners on the tangible dividends of investing in the rule of law in their respective countries.

Building on these engagements, IDLO advocated for the rule of law at the UN General Assembly High-Level Week and the Summit of the Future.

In the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly, I reaffirmed IDLO’s commitment to ensuring that the rule of law—at both national and international levels—serves as a cornerstone for a more peaceful, just, and sustainable future.

We also advocated for greater political and financial support for the rule of law in many other forums, including at the 33rd Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna; the Human Rights Council in Geneva; and the OECD Global Roundtable on Access to Justice, hosted by Canada.

IDLO partnered with the World Bank as one of the co-hosts of the Bank’s inaugural Global Forum on Justice and Rule of Law in Washington, DC.

During the opening plenary session, I presented IDLO’s insights into the factors contributing to injustice, inequality, and insecurity, as well as strategies to enhance access to justice by 2030.

I also met with senior leaders at the World Bank, including the General Counsel, and the Director of the Governance Practice, to discuss potential collaboration.

We also entered a partnership with the Hague Conference on Private International Law, focusing on digitalization and its impact on the rule of law and access to justice.

This year, IDLO was granted Permanent Observer status at the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), and attended its 149th Assembly in Geneva and the 10th Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians in Yerevan, strengthening collaboration with parliamentarians and youth leaders worldwide.

I was pleased to participate in several events with Global Women Leaders.

GWL Voices comprises women leaders committed to promoting a gender-equal international system, enhancing multilateralism, and increasing women's representation in leadership roles.

## **Management Updates**

Turning to management updates,

Over the past year, IDLO has faced the challenging task of addressing the consequences of a fraud in one of our country offices.

Following its discovery by IDLO staff, I prioritized transparency and accountability in resolving the matter.

We commissioned a thorough investigation, including a forensic audit by a respected external firm.

To strengthen oversight, we implemented additional safeguards, commissioned an independent assessment of internal financial controls, and are addressing identified issues through a detailed plan.

We coordinated closely with the donor and regularly updated the Audit and Finance Committee and Standing Committee.

Ensuring the trust of our Member Parties and donors remains my highest priority, and I am committed to upholding the highest standards of transparency as Director-General.

The financial results for 2024 are in line with previous years. I am pleased to report that unrestricted revenue exceeded forecasts, thanks to increased contributions from Italy and the United States.

With careful management, we are on track to end the year with a positive operational result.

I would like to thank all of our donors for their generous support.

Core contributions from Member Parties are particularly critical to enable us to strengthen IDLO's systems, invest in our staff, and promote innovation.

They represent a vote of confidence in our work and mandate. I am grateful to Member Parties that provide these resources and urge all Members to consider contributing to support IDLO's mission.

### **Looking Ahead**

In conclusion, I am deeply inspired by what we have accomplished together in the pursuit of justice, peace, and sustainable development.

Our mission—to leverage the transformative power of the rule of law to address global challenges and empower communities—remains as vital and relevant as ever.

As we prepare to embark on the next strategic cycle, IDLO's objective remains clear: a world where the rule of law serves as a catalyst for peace, justice, and inclusion.

To achieve this, we must continue to deepen our partnerships, invest in our people and systems, and mobilize political and financial support for the rule of law.

The journey ahead will be challenging, but with your continued support, I am confident that we can succeed. Thank you for your trust, partnership, and commitment to justice.

Together, we can create a future where everyone can live in dignity and equality under the rule of law.