

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF ADVISERS ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES 12 December 2025

Board Composition

1. In 2025, the Board of Advisers of IDLO included the following six members: H.E. Mehmet Hasan Göğüş (Chair), Mr. Diego García-Sayán, Prof. Carlo Albergo Giusti, Dr. Hoang Ly Anh, Mr. Ahmer Bilal Soofi and Ms. Zhou Xiaoyan.

Board's Advisory Role

2. In accordance with IDLO's governing documents, the Board serves an advisory function to the Organization, with members acting in their individual capacities as experts in rule of law and development.

Board Activities

3. On 7-8 July 2025, the Board Chair and three members of the Board gathered in Rome for the annual in-person meeting at IDLO headquarters.
4. This was the first meeting chaired by Ambassador Göğüş, who was elected to the position of Chair by consensus in February 2025. It was also the first meeting of the Board since the adoption of IDLO's Strategic Plan 2025-2028, on which the Board had been consulted during its June 2024 session.
5. Following the Chair's opening remarks, the Director-General (DG) presented an update on IDLO's activities since the previous meeting, including outlining progress made in response to the Board's earlier recommendations.
6. The Director, Office of the Director-General, provided a detailed presentation of the new Strategic Plan 2025-2028. The Board welcomed the new Plan, describing it as well-structured and realistic, with clearly defined outcomes that would guide IDLO and its staff in advancing the rule of law for peace and sustainable development. Members commended the broad and inclusive consultation process behind the Plan and were proud of their own contribution to its development.
7. The Acting Director of Programmes briefed the Board on implementation of the Plan through IDLO's programmatic work, illustrating activities under each of the six main outcomes. It was noted that Outcome 1—expanding access to justice—represented more than half of IDLO's overall portfolio.
8. A dedicated session was held on "Diversifying IDLO's donor base: identifying new opportunities for funding and partnerships." In this discussion, led by the Director-General, members observed that global demand for rule of law assistance continues to rise amid conflict, fragility, and inequalities, while donor priorities increasingly shifted toward humanitarian, security, and defense spending, with consequent reductions in development budgets.

9. The Board commended IDLO's continued efforts to broaden its funding base, despite financial constraints, and welcomed recent achievements, including a new agreement with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency that increases core funding by 40%; a multi-year partnership with the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development; the first ever core contribution from the Government of Türkiye; additional programmatic funding from Italy; and ongoing financial support from the Philippines and from non-members including Canada, Denmark, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.
10. Members emphasized the importance of enhancing IDLO's visibility through policy advocacy and targeted events, and suggested strengthening ties with partners, including the World Bank Group, as well as with regional organizations, including ASEAN.
11. Further ideas for engagement included initiating cooperation with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, partnerships with academia and relevant think tanks, and exploring opportunities with private foundations such as the Aga Khan Foundation and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.
12. The Director of Research and Learning made a presentation on IDLO's research and policy work, with a special focus on customary and informal justice (CIJ). The Board showed strong interest in the topic, observing that various forms of CIJ in their own countries serve as effective mechanisms for dispute resolution and help ease pressure on the formal justice systems.
13. In closing, the Chair underlined that the meeting took place at a pivotal moment for international relations and for IDLO's financial sustainability, and reaffirmed the Board's support for the Organization's distinct mandate and vital role amid today's global challenges.

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