

Nordic statement to be held at WFP's Executive Board, 23-26 June 2025.

Thank you, Madam President.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Iceland, Finland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

Madam Executive Director,

We commend the WFP for its **impressive results** and achievements in 2024 in times of extreme and unprecedented humanitarian needs and shrinking humanitarian funding.

This Executive Board meeting takes place at a time when the UN stands at a critical juncture. The Nordic countries welcome the UN Secretary General's **UN80 reform** initiative and expect to see ambitious reform proposals. The UN must adapt to a new geopolitical and financial reality, with less resources and more complex challenges, and work better as one – from HQ to country level.

We welcome and **appreciate WFP's active role in both the UN80 and Humanitarian reset processes**. Humanitarian principles should guide the humanitarian reset. Furthermore, we need to empower locally led actors and Humanitarian Coordinators, as well as prioritize operational presence and normative capacities.

Moreover, due to its size and mandate, WFP has systemic responsibilities, including supporting strategic prioritization within the broader enabling environment. Pooling of services, such as logistics (UNHAS), data collection and analysis, are all areas where WFP can play an important role in the ongoing process.

The Nordic countries will continue to leverage our **flexible funding** in support of strategic and resource efficient humanitarian reset and localization. Flexible and multi-year funding enables WFP to act fast, which is important in order to quickly reach the most vulnerable when needs arise, and to ensure operational flexibility and lower transaction costs. We encourage other members to prioritize flexible funding to enhance agility and improve the quality of allocation.

We remain deeply concerned for WFPs staff in the many ongoing conflict situations. We reiterate our profound appreciation of the brave and dedicated staff of WFP working in the most challenging and dangerous circumstances. The UN and the humanitarian system are facing not only a funding crisis but also a systematic attack on principles. **Values and principles** underlying our humanitarian engagement are more important than ever. It is crucial to uphold international humanitarian law, UN norms and standards, and safeguard humanitarian space.

WFP **faces multiple** dilemmas linked to financing gaps and increasing needs. We need to focus our limited resources on those who need them the most, in the most vulnerable situations and with the most cost- efficient ways of working.

We understand WFP's desire to find pragmatic and constructive compromise solutions regarding language, and to avoid politicization of multilateral boards and negotiations. We do, however, strongly believe in the **importance of safeguarding UN negotiated norms and language, including on gender equality, disability inclusion, the SDG's and climate change.**

These norms and standards are not only the backbone for multilateral cooperation, but also key to operational success and fundamental prerequisites for many donor countries in their humanitarian policy and budget allocations. The Nordics are ready to contribute to compromise solutions, preferably within an UN-wide, overarching and coherent context

The Nordic countries support the proposed **three strategic objectives** in the draft strategic plan. We appreciate how the plan aims to sharpen WFP's geographic and thematic focus, while stepping up handover strategies. Furthermore, we are pleased to see the pronounced focus on saving lives, while also actively seeking to reduce humanitarian needs through building resilience and anticipatory and early action. We encourage WFP to continue its work on strengthening national school meal programs. Securing financing to maintain and strengthen resilience efforts must also remain a priority. We acknowledge the importance of continued efforts in line with cross-cutting priorities, including protection **and accountability to affected people** – which we consider mission-critical in WFP's operations.

Finally: We acknowledge the need to reduce the workforce due to the budget situation. We request WFP to keep the Board abreast of the process, in particular ensuring transparency on actual savings, and how accountability and assurance are ensured.

Thank you.