

**Statement by the Nordic countries Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden
at the Forty-Seventh Session of the IFAD Governing Council, 14-15 February 2024**

To be submitted in writing and registered in the GC minutes.

Thank you, Mr./Madam Chair.

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

Mr. President, the world is heading in the wrong direction when it comes to food security and hunger. Reaching SDG2 – Zero Hunger in 2030 – looks distant. This is not news to anyone, least of all you and the IFAD staff. The reasons for this situation are manifold: Conflicts and war, where we highlight unprovoked war of aggression of Russia against Ukraine, the conflict in Gaza, which has led to a humanitarian and food security catastrophe of a major order, and the severe hunger crisis in Sudan; climate change and its effects on agriculture, migration, and economic development, as well as economic shocks, which all play a role for hitting food security hard. Especially for the poorest and most vulnerable people. Many problems compound each other, and the poorest often has very small opportunities to change their situation. They need our support. We need to significantly expand our efforts to eliminate hunger and food insecurity to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

IFAD plays a crucial role in supporting this endeavour. IFAD's ability to reach the poorest and most vulnerable, in a way that unlocks resources from the private sector, government partners and other international entities but first and foremost from the beneficiaries themselves, is a precious tool for achieving a sustainable rural development that truly lifts people out of poverty. We will only achieve this by enabling rural populations and small-scale farmers to sustainably support themselves, and participate in local, regional, and global markets based on their own strengths and resources.

At the same time, IFAD's work must achieve many other things in parallel. Ensuring that rural development contributes to stronger resilience among rural communities against climate shocks, against biodiversity losses and fragile situations is key. Results will be less sustainable if gender equality is not strengthened, or if the particular needs of youth or indigenous peoples are not addressed.

Innovation for a Food-Secure Future is the theme of this year's Governing Council. The Nordic countries welcome this. We will not be able to move into the future with yesterday's methods and yesterday's visions. Instead, IFAD needs to further develop and implement innovative instruments which support sustainable rural development, in close cooperation with the private sector, national authorities and other partners.

During the IFAD13 replenishment round, the report of which we have the pleasure of formally adopt at this Council, Members and IFAD agreed to strive in this direction together. The Nordics, jointly the greatest financial contributor to IFAD12, will play our part, and shoulder our common burden.

We congratulate you with a successful and forward-looking replenishment round, Mr. President. We do so wholeheartedly, and we thank all countries that have so far made pledges to IFAD13 and encourage others to join. But we must not stop at patting ourselves on the

backs. We all need to do more to achieve the SDGs and a world without hunger, and we need a strong and efficient IFAD to be one of the leaders along this path.

Thank you.