THE UN STRATEGY OF THE FINNISH FOREIGN SERVICE

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The United Nations is an indispensable instrument in international cooperation. For Finland it also constitutes a unique forum of foreign policy. The strengths of the UN in the constantly changing multilateral cooperation include its universal membership and the diversity of its activities. It is in Finland’s interests to improve the UN’s legitimacy and ability to take action.

The previous UN Strategy of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland was adopted in May, 2008. The Government Programme of 2011 set the goal of updating the Strategy. Following the Security Council election in October 2012 we felt it necessary to reform the Strategy, rather than only update it. There was a need to sharpen Finland’s profile in the UN, and this Strategy aims precisely at doing that.

Finland is a respected partner in the UN. In turn, the UN as an organisation enjoys broad support in Finnish society. Within the world organisation we are among those states whose word can be counted on, and among those that present solutions rather than problems. This lays a solid foundation for our action and influence in the UN.
The greatest challenge of humankind is to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development is also the overarching theme of this Strategy. Within the UN Finland promotes peace and security as well as human rights and development, and regards it necessary that all of the aforementioned dimensions be realised so as to achieve genuinely sustainable development.

Persistent, enduring and determined efforts are required for achieving results and raising one’s profile in the UN. Clear prioritisation is needed. In our future UN policy we must increasingly focus on the essential from Finland’s standpoint and the concrete means by which the fundamental issues can be advanced. This Strategy defines Finland’s priorities for the coming years.

We hope that this Strategy and its four spearhead themes serve as a concrete guiding principle for all who work with UN-related matters.

Erkki Tuomioja    Heidi Hautala    Alexander Stubb
1 PREFACE

The United Nations (UN) is a unique forum for Finland’s foreign policy. The world organisation, encompassing almost all of the sovereign states in the world – 193 member states at present – is a gathering place par excellence for the international community. There are scores of states in the world with whom Finland would probably not interface without the UN. For Finland the UN is the door that leads to the world outside of the European Union and the leading industrialised countries. It is a barometer of the world’s constantly shifting power relations, and a kind of clearing house for international politics.

The UN was founded in 1945, after the Second World War. The goal was to ‘save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’, as the lofty Preamble of the UN Charter states. During the nearly seven decades since the founding of the UN the dynamics of multilateral cooperation have undergone a profound transformation. The international system has become increasingly multipolar, spawning altogether new cooperative structures. While interdependency between states has radically grown, the role of non-governmental actors has also strengthened. The concept of security has become more comprehensive. These changes have had an effect on the UN. Nevertheless, the UN, through its universal membership, wide-ranging action and legitimacy has retained its status as the cornerstone of multilateral cooperation.

Owing to the circumstances that prevailed when the UN was founded, the prominence of the states that won the Second World War is particularly accentuated in the Security Council, the organisation’s most important body. Throughout the history of the UN, great power relations have significantly been reflected in its action. The ability of the UN to take action in the area of peace and security was visibly limited during the Cold War, but, conversely, the capacity of the Security Council
improved in the aftermath of the Cold War. In spite of this, Security Council reform has stalled, even though progress has been made in the other areas of UN reform.

The UN possesses considerable normative power. The guidelines adopted by the world organisation create rules for international cooperation, impacting the lives of millions. The binding resolutions of the Security Council continue to be the only tools for authorizing the international community’s use of force. Thanks to the UN the common resolve to promote human rights has strengthened in recent decades. Through the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) extreme poverty rates have been reduced by half, ahead of the deadline, and the UN is presently preparing a new, post-2015 global development agenda.

UN programmes, funds and specialised agencies make an impact in people’s everyday lives on all continents. The treaties and normative standards adopted by the UN guide our lives in many ways. The UN is often the first organisation to provide relief in crisis areas, and it plays a leading role in coordinating humanitarian assistance. The UN is also the key actor in promoting long-term sustainable development. Nonetheless, the UN operates far and wide, even in industrialised countries. Examples of the well-known UN ‘brands’ include the WHO’s International Certificate of Vaccination (i.e. the ‘Yellow Card’), UNESCO’s World Heritage List, and UNICEF’s efforts to improve the living standards of children.

Not only is the UN a forum for Finland’s own foreign policy, it is also a central arena for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the European Union. By monitoring regional crises and conflicts through the UN Finland also improves its potential to actively participate in the formulation of the CFSP. In the UN Finland, too, often gains access to the original sources of information.

A rules-based international system is the requisite for well-functioning international cooperation. Finland, being a small country, is particularly dependent on the rules-based system. A country such as Finland must
also be present at the tables where the rules are set. The motivation for our active involvement in the UN is not only limited to wanting to make the world a more just and better place for all of its inhabitants: it also serves our own national interests.

1.1 **The peace and security, human rights and development-triangle as Finland’s guiding principle**

An underlying principle in UN action is the belief that peace and security, human rights and development create a triangle within which no single element can separately occur without the simultaneous presence of the others. Whereas this view was confirmed in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document, the very same line of thinking was already manifested in the Preamble of the UN Charter. Nevertheless, in practice peace and security, human rights and development often compete with each other over funding and other limited resources. Different entities also create political confrontation between these three dimensions.

Finland believes that the balanced development of peace and security, human rights and development is important for the UN. Finland also actively endeavours to strengthen all three elements and strives for an increasingly close interrelationship between them. **This is the guiding principle of Finland’s UN policy.**

1.2 **In a changing environment, cooperation and partnerships are of increasing importance**

In recent years antagonism between the global North and South has epitomised many UN activities. A kind of ‘West against the rest’ attitude prevails. For instance, when it comes to women’s rights international consensus has not increased in recent years. On the contrary, women’s
rights and certain other human rights are now facing newfound challenges, even opposition.

The so-called emerging powers are demanding more say within the international system. The institutional structures of the UN, built on the post-WWII situation, are widely regarded as obsolete and unjust. The best known example of this involves the aforementioned composition of the Security Council which underscores the position of the victors in WWII. Even one permanent member of the Council can paralyse the UN, as seen in conjunction with the situation in Syria. Considering the legitimacy of the UN a continual reform of the organisation is important. However, over-optimistic expectations should be avoided.

The EU is Finland’s most important reference group in the UN. Finland attempts to actively influence the EU’s common positions, operates accordingly and strives towards stronger EU coherence. Even so, the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy has not materialised quite the way in which Finland hoped it would. This has been particularly manifest in the UN where the EU has failed in achieving common positions in certain fundamental questions.

The other Nordic countries are yet another important reference group for Finland. The Nordic countries’ strong contribution to UN action has traditionally been valued. On the other hand, the Nordic countries’ recent losses in important UN elections suggest that the reputation of the Nordic countries does not necessarily carry the same sway as in the past. In the future the Nordic countries must more carefully consider their approach, lest they appear as condescending or even as ‘know-it-alls’.

In order to prevent the creation of strong boundaries, and eliminate those that exist, it is important to extend cooperation and partnerships beyond the confines of traditional country groupings. Hence, Finland actively seeks partnerships outside the European Union and the Nordic countries. For example, Finland cooperates with Turkey in promoting mediation within the UN system. In the coming years Finland increasingly aims to invest in these kinds of partnerships.
Partners are needed at home as well. The Foreign Service’s cooperation with the other authorities, Parliament, the private sector and the civil society support Finland’s action in the UN. For example, various initiatives from within Finnish society, and partnerships with different UN bodies can, for their part, increase Finland’s clout in the UN.

1.3 Sustainable Development – our greatest shared challenge

Finland’s action in the UN is also guided by strong awareness of the fact that the greatest shared challenge for humankind is to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development comprises the environmental, economic and social dimensions. Environmentally sustainable development is the foundation that supports everything else. Then again, without social and economic sustainability, including the reduction of inequality, it is impossible to achieve sustainable development. The eradication of poverty and sustainable development are inherently intertwined. During the past century the world’s population quadrupled, passing the seven billion mark. Irreversible changes have already taken place in the environment. At the same time inequality keeps growing and global uncertainty is on the rise.

We cannot know for certain whether it is any longer possible to achieve sustainable development. What we do know is that man-made climate change continues to advance. As the final report of the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, established by the UN Secretary-General, states: “we need to change dramatically, beginning with how we think about our relationship to each other, to future generations and to the ecosystems that support us”.

Even though the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), unfortunately, did not meet all expectations, the UN continues to be the only global forum where the necessary actions to support sustainable development can be agreed. The work on new Sustainable Development Goals is, therefore, of primary importance. Simultaneously,
the preparations for the post-2015 global development agenda – following the Millennium Development Goals – have begun. Finland considers it important that the process of establishing the Sustainable Development Goals and that for the post-2015 global development agenda be brought together to create a single set of universal goals which cover in a balanced way the three elements of development: the economic, social and environmental dimensions. The goals should be focused, clear and measurable, and they should take into account the dimension of peace and security.

1.4 Prioritisation increases effectiveness

The UN agenda is very extensive and Finland cannot possibly participate in the handling of all matters. We are continually forced to make choices. Finland particularly invests in such topics through which we can advance our most prized values and objectives, where we can clearly bring added value and which, by virtue of Finland’s previous experiences and action, we can credibly promote. Prioritisation is necessary so as to increase the effectiveness of our policy and the results of our action.

In October 2012 Finland was a candidate in the election for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Finland’s competitors Australia and Luxembourg were elected. The election campaign proved that the United Nations and Finland’s UN policy enjoy widespread support in Finnish society. Regardless of the result it is obvious that Finland’s strong commitment to the UN is internationally acclaimed as well. Nevertheless, in order to increase its effectiveness and visibility Finland must sharpen its profile. This Strategy aims at precisely that.

This Strategy defines the themes on which Finland will especially focus in the UN. To some degree they involve areas in which Finland has already achieved a leading role of a kind in the UN. Finland’s cooperation with Turkey in promoting mediation within the UN system can be mentioned as an example. In addition to the spearhead themes there are topics under which Finland supports the activities of other
states and which Finland actively monitors. In certain UN programmes and funds Finland is among the biggest development donors. This, as such, increases Finland’s authority in advancing its own interests. Nonetheless, Finland must deprioritise certain themes.

Sufficient resources will be earmarked for the promotion of Finland’s spearhead themes, both at the Foreign Ministry and at Finland’s missions accredited to the UN. The Strategy does not alter the goals, priorities or practices presented in the Government Security and Defence Policy Report, Government Development Policy Programme, the Human Rights Strategy of the Finnish Foreign Service or other comparable guidelines. This being the case, the functions of the UN Strategy are coordinated on an ongoing basis with existing programmes and guidelines. When it comes to development policy, goals will also be looked at in agency-specific strategies. UN agency-related goals will be detailed in associated special strategies.
2 SPEARHEAD THEMES IN FINLAND’S UN POLICY

Basically, in the long run all of Finland’s efforts in the UN aim at achieving sustainability in global development. There is no silver bullet for achieving this goal because of the complex causal chain involved. Security, the internal situation within societies and development are closely interlinked. Humans impact the environment and the environment sets the limits for human action. Action must be taken at many levels so as to achieve genuinely sustainable development. The UN system may operate locally and globally as well as normatively and concretely. Nonetheless, it is imperative that the traditional functions of the UN in the fields of peace and security, human rights and development be combined into such action that sustainably and effectively advances global development.

One concrete option to promote the kind of thinking which takes into account interdependency and the requirements of sustainable development is to define new Sustainable Development Goals as part of the post-2015 development agenda. Therefore, Finland considers it important that peace and security, human rights, democracy and the rule of law, along with development and the environment, also be included in the future targets. Finland endeavours to promote such an approach in the UN which genuinely transcends sectoral boundaries.

The goal of Finland’s active UN policy is to advance the sustainability of global development. While Finland’s action is broad-based, it focuses on four spearhead themes so as to attain effectiveness and a distinct profile in the UN. Common to the themes is the fact that for a long time already Finland has advanced them and achieved results in them. All of them are also central from the viewpoint of Finland’s fundamental long-term goals. The themes are:
1) Conflict prevention and resolution,

2) Promoting gender equality,

3) Supporting democratic institutions and the rule of law, and

4) Eradicating extreme poverty, reducing inequality and promoting environmental sustainability.

Each spearhead theme takes into account social, economic and environmental sustainability in development. Progress in finding solutions to climate questions is an essential prerequisite for advancing each of Finland’s spearhead themes. In advancing the themes Finland consistently pays attention to the connection between peace and security, human rights and development. Likewise, the steering function of other programmes and guidelines concerning development policy, human rights and humanitarian assistance is also fully taken into account. Each theme supports the others, and acts as a vehicle for achieving the others’ goals. The following is a listing of concrete actions in promoting the spearhead themes within the UN system.

2.1 Conflict prevention and resolution

The capability of the UN to prevent, manage and resolve violent conflicts is still the principal yardstick by which the capacity of the organisation is measured. Finland’s competence harks back to our traditional peacekeeping contribution – 50 000 Finns have served as UN peacekeepers – and our participation in mediation.

Finland endeavours to strengthen the role of preventive action in the UN. Development and human rights are central to conflict prevention and sustainable peace. On the other hand peace and security are necessary elements for sustainable development and the realisation of human rights. Finland also promotes the consideration of this viewpoint in the post-2015 development agenda.
In the coming years in the UN Finland will especially focus on mediation, the development of Special Political Missions (SPM) and strengthening international support for the Responsibility to Protect.

Mediation

Finland has played a decisive role in raising mediation to the core of the UN agenda during the past few years. The Group of Friends of Mediation was founded in September 2010 in New York on the initiative of Finland and Turkey. Since the first ministerial meeting the number of member states has increased from 12 to 37. The United States is the newest member: its membership was approved in the spring of 2013. In addition, regional organisations and the UN participate in the Group, which increases the number of members to 45 (as of spring 2013).

As a result of the work completed in the Group of Friends of Mediation, in June 2011 the General Assembly adopted the first ever resolution on mediation for the UN system. Based on the resolution the Secretary-General of the United Nations developed guidance for more effective mediation, simplifying the basic rules of mediation. The future efforts of the Group of Friends of Mediation also aim at strengthening the normative base of mediation in the UN, and at mediation receiving more resources internationally. The intention is to increase cooperation between the UN and regional organisations. Finland can provide added value to this on the grounds of previous cooperation with the African Union (AU), among others.

Finland’s credibility as a promoter of mediation demands the existence of capable and trustworthy Finnish mediators. NGOs such as the Crisis Management Initiative and Finn Church Aid play a central role in this.

Finland especially invests in strengthening the role of women in mediation. In addition, Finland has recently accrued niche expertise in utilising the role of traditional and religious leaders in mediation where a state’s own institutions are fragile. This niche area will also be developed, albeit with the caveat that reliance on traditional structures not diminish the status of women.
Finland’s cooperation with Turkey has proved extremely constructive in the promotion of mediation. This cooperation has made it possible for Finland to reach out to countries and regional/interregional organisations on which Finland would otherwise have had no influence. The partnership with Turkey will continue.

Steered by guidelines such as the Development Policy Programme, and others, Finland also funds mediation. Whereas this support is particularly directed to the UN Department of Political Affairs, Finnish and other actors also receive support, above all on the request of the UN.

**Strengthening the role of Special Political Missions in UN crisis management**

Finland possesses strong expertise in UN peacekeeping. Finnish participation in UN-led peacekeeping has decreased over the past decades. Nonetheless, the UN-led UNIFIL operation in Lebanon is (spring 2013) Finland’s largest single crisis management contribution by far and it will likely remain the largest one in the coming years. The decreasing volume of Finland’s participation mirrors the wider structural transformation in UN peacekeeping. The vast majority of UN contingents now come from the global South.

Along with traditional peacekeeping missions the importance of so-called Special Political Missions (SPM) is on the rise. In addition to military crisis management, increasing attention is given to civilian crisis management. With its SPMs the UN tries to manage complex peace processes, exemplified by the new assistance mission in Somalia, the Joint Special Representative for Syria and the regional centre for Central Asia.

The goal of the Special Political Missions is to find resolution in lieu of mere conflict management. Most of them are, in practice, civilian crisis management in the different phases of the conflict cycle. Most SPMs are inextricably linked with mediation or, in effect, constitute mediation.
Finland invests in the broad-based development of the SPMs and, together with Mexico, strives for a leading role. Owing to its strong peacekeeping and mediation tradition Finland has good chances in succeeding in this. In addition, the lessons learned in developing the EU’s crisis management, especially civilian crisis management, are being utilised in the development of Special Political Missions.

The development of the SPMs also takes into account the improvement of the early-warning aspect. For example, human rights violations may be an indication of a developing crisis.

**Strengthening support for the Responsibility to Protect**

In the 2005 World Summit Outcome the General Assembly adopted the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). This new norm is not yet fully established. The concept emerged as a result of the crises in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s, which spawned strong critique towards the ineptitude of the international community and, specifically, that of the UN.

The importance of R2P in international politics has significantly grown in the past few years since it has been invoked, among other things, in Security Council (SC) Resolutions. The general consensus is that the SC Resolution, which referred to R2P in its preamble, and its implementation managed to prevent widespread violence against the civilian population in Libya. The Resolution authorised the use of force to protect civilians. In addition, with regard to the situation in Ivory Coast in early 2011 the R2P principle was invoked. The expectations put on the international community to tackle the crimes under the Responsibility to Protect – genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing – have significantly grown.

Following the operation in Libya critique has also been directed at the manner in which the R2P principle was implemented. Differences of opinion between the countries that traditionally have strongly supported the R2P and the countries that emphasise traditional state sovereignty
have become all the more obvious. This development is partly associated with the strengthening role of the so-called emerging powers. As an example of this debate one can mention Brazil’s “Responsibility while Protecting” initiative in 2011.

In its UN policy Finland increasingly emphasises the consolidation of and international support for the Responsibility to Protect. Finland also aims to build bridges with countries that have taken a critical view on the R2P. Finland underscores the significance of prevention and the role of mediation, among other things. The fundamental principles of the Responsibility to Protect also entail the international community’s responsibility to assist and support states in the implementation of the obligation. Development policy can bolster the developing countries’ own capacity in preventing crimes as per the R2P (genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing, including their incitement).

2.2 Promoting gender equality

Finland’s goal is to mainstream human rights in all activities of the UN. While the UN Human Rights Council and the Third Committee of the General Assembly are distinct important human rights fora, Finland also promotes human rights across the UN system. Finland underscores the indivisibility of human rights, i.e. the fact that human rights are equal and interdependent. The new Human Rights Strategy of the Finnish Foreign Service also provides guidelines for Finland’s conduct in the UN. The cross-cutting goals of the Human Rights Strategy are the eradication of discrimination and increased openness and inclusion.

When it comes to development policy and development cooperation the Government’s Development Policy Programme, which also guides the allocation of development aid, is founded on the principle that Finland’s development policy and development cooperation shall be human rights based in its entirety.
Finland’s spearhead theme in the field of human rights in the UN is gender equality. Finland particularly invests in strengthening the political and economic participation of women, implementing SC Resolution 1325 (Women, Peace and Security), and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights.

**Strengthening the political and economic participation of women**

In the UN Finland actively promotes the political and economic participation of women. The realisation of rights and the nondiscrimination of women and girls are important in view of advancing sustainable development in all countries. Investing in the education of women and girls is of utmost importance as regards stronger political and economic participation of women. Finland’s internationally renowned education expertise offers a good basis for promoting this aspect.

In the UN Finland particularly supports strengthening the political and economic participation of women through UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women. Finland was actively involved in founding it in 2010, and endeavours to strongly increase its financing to the activities of UN Women. Strengthening the participation of women can also be supported through other organisations and channels.

Finland promotes gender equality on the boards of UN programmes and funds so that they work for gender equality in their respective fields. Finland also pays attention to the gender-specific impacts of climate change.

The Commission on the Status of Women of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) centres on gender equality-related issues and on improving the status of women. Finland, a member of ECOSOC from 2013-2016, focuses on having an active and productive role in the Commission. Finland also develops cooperation between the NGOs that advance the rights of women and girls and female rights activists.
Implementing the Resolution ‘Women, Peace and Security’

Security Council Resolution 1325 ‘Women, Peace and Security’, adopted in 2000, emphasises that women and girls should not only be seen as victims of conflict. Rather, they should be regarded as active participants whose involvement in the peace process, peacebuilding and conflict prevention is a prerequisite for sustainable peace. Finland considers that the balanced implementation of Resolution 1325, including all other associated resolutions, is important. Finland can especially provide added value by advancing the active role of women. At the same time Finland emphasises increased attention to the prevention of sexual violence in conflict.

The implementation of Resolution ‘Women, Peace and Security’ is a key element of strengthening peace and security. Concurrently, it is also a human rights issue.

Finland has already attained a prominent role in the UN as an expert in advancing women’s rights. This work will continue in the coming years. Finland endeavours to actively persuade the Security Council to systematically take into account the gender perspective and especially women’s rights in all country-specific action. In New York Finland has organised several high-level events on women’s rights in an attempt to focus attention on the implementation of Resolution 1325. Finland, together with many other cooperation partners, will continue to organise such events and to use other means in order to advance a comprehensive implementation of the Resolution. Important domestic partners include the national 1325 Follow-up Group and the 1325 NGO Network.

The role of women in peace processes is highlighted in Finland’s mediation-advancing action. Finland backs the UN Mediation Support Unit by, among other things, financing the gender training geared at mediators so as to make certain that the United Nations’ statements on the status of women also materialise in practice. From time to time some UN member states attempt to limit the Resolution ‘Women, Peace and Security’ to only apply to armed conflict and post-conflict situations.
Finland believes that Resolution 1325 is essential in conflict prevention, which is precisely what Finland is endeavouring to consolidate in the UN.

**Promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights**

Sexual and reproductive health and rights are important for the realisation of human rights and for the development of society in general. This is a social theme and any change therein involves everyone, not just women and girls. Non-existent sexual and reproductive health services and glaring shortcomings in sexual and reproductive rights, such as the right to information and sexual education, concretely affect the poorest women and girls in developing countries. The realisation of sexual and reproductive health and rights is a precondition for the reduction of poverty and sustainable economic and social development. In spite of this, the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights has encountered resistance in recent years, even within the European Union. The role of Finland and like-minded countries is highlighted, lest the commitments made at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo be diluted.

The goal of the High-Level Task Force for ICPD is to be able to promote everyone’s sexual and reproductive health and rights in the 20-year review of the Programme of Action (a.k.a. Cairo Consensus) in 2014 without any discrimination as regards sexual orientation or HIV status, for example, and that they be prominently placed on the post-2015 agenda. President Tarja Halonen and the former President of Mozambique Joaquim Chissano are the co-chairs of the Task Force.

The Nordic countries are Finland’s most important reference group in advancing sexual and reproductive health and rights. Disarray in the EU as regards this topic accentuates the need to seek partners from other country groupings as well.

Finland is among the largest supporters of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), both politically and financially. It plays a key part in improving the status of women and youth, and in achieving sexual and reproductive health and rights.
2.3 **Supporting democratic institutions and the rule of law**

Most UN member states have major challenges with regard to democracy. Since human rights and sustainable development can only become established in a democracy it is important that the world organisation support democracy and the rule of law in all of its member states. Finland also intends to strongly raise the topic of the rule of law onto the international agenda concerning development. Moreover, Finland focuses on limiting impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community.

**Supporting democratic institutions and the rule of law in UN activities**

In September 2012 the General Assembly held its first high-level meeting on the rule of law. Mr Sauli Niinistö, the President of the Republic of Finland, led the Finnish delegation at the meeting. Finland promotes the implementation of the outcome document\(^1\) of the meeting, supports a comprehensive follow-up process and actively participates in associated negotiations. Supporting the rule of law must be a guiding principle in all activities of the UN, both at the UN Headquarters and at the field level. The pledges Finland made at the meeting concerned the prevention of violence against women and various forms of international cooperation.

Finland’s objective is that the UN programmes, funds and specialised agencies it supports strengthen the rule of law as effectively as possible and improve access to legal remedies to the poorest and most vulnerable people and groups. The Government’s Development Policy Programme sets the framework for this action. Access to legal remedies denotes an individual’s prospects of receiving assistance or rectification when his rights have been violated, or when they have not been fully realised. Improvements in the access to legal remedies require the strengthening of democratic institutions: in practice, only democratic institutions can effectively safeguard the rights that belong to all people.

\(^1\) Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Rule of Law
In states recovering from conflict, or in fragile states, support must focus on strengthening security and trust between the state and the civil society. The state’s capacity to see to its basic functions such as raising revenue, promoting employment, providing basic services or being able to run a well-functioning and responsible judicial and security sector are the key questions. Compared to individual donor countries the UN can often allocate more resources to demanding rule of law programmes which require extensive and complex competence. Finland also seeks cooperation partners through the UN system and other donors for projects to be implemented in fragile states.

More attention to the rule of law in the international development debate

Promoting democracy, the rule of law and human rights is part of the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted in 2000. However, the themes were not included in the Millennium Development Goals. This thematic has now gained prominence in the international debate, and it is included in the report of the high-level panel set by the Secretary-General, published in May 2013. Finland emphasises that the rule of law is founded on the respect and implementation of human and basic rights that belong to all people. There is a mutually complementing link between the rule of law and development, as noted in the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the rule of law in 2012.

The link between the rule of law and guaranteed effective and equitable public services and minimum social standards must be increasingly taken into account. Very tangible problems, like there not being a birth certificate, can prevent access to the realisation of rights and services such as education, health care and, especially, participation in decision-making.

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2 High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
Reducing impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community

Achieving sustainable peace in areas recovering from conflict demands the realisation of justice. Ever since the 1990s the attitudes towards the culture of impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community have changed. Finland regards this development very important. Finland strongly supported the founding of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and is now a staunch champion of the Court. Finland has cooperated with the ad hoc war crime tribunals established by the UN and provided voluntary funding to the so-called hybrid tribunals. Finland continues its support to the reduction of impunity.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court assigns the UN Security Council certain powers. Along with the ICC's proceedings the challenges associated with the relationship between an independent court of law and a political actor have become accentuated. Finland regards that the Security Council must be as consistent as possible when assigning cases to the ICC. Consequently, the Security Council must also monitor them as efficiently as possible. Finland also endeavours to increase Africa’s support to the ICC, where many countries are state parties to the Statute.

States shoulder the primary responsibility for investigating, prosecuting and sentencing the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the independence, effectiveness and capacity of national criminal justice systems. States are also responsible for the prevention of crime, including associated effective action. Finland underscores the central role of UN actors in these efforts.
2.4 Eradicating extreme poverty, reducing inequality and promoting environmental sustainability

Pursuant to the Government’s Development Policy Programme the “overarching goal of Finland’s development policy is the eradication of extreme poverty…in accordance with the UN Millennium Development Goals”. While remarkable results have been achieved in the reduction of poverty in developing countries during this Millennium, all too many people still exist without adequate livelihoods, the basic necessities of life, social security or the opportunities to participate as fully-fledged members of society. The eradication of extreme poverty must also remain a priority area in the post-2015 agenda of the UN.

The results of poverty eradication are unevenly divided between and within countries. The reduction of inequality has become an increasingly important topic as regards achieving fair and sustainable development that promotes stability. Finland considers it necessary to pay increasing attention to this dimension in promoting sustainable development, including the post-2015 development goals. It must also be taken into account in the field activities of the UN.

The UN is a very important forum for the advancement of Finland’s development policy goals. In addition to its global normative role the funds channelled through UN bodies concretely advance Finland’s development policy goals and the spearhead themes of this UN Strategy, under the guidance of the Development Policy Programme.

Within the UN Finland works towards the integration of the dimensions of sustainable development, striving for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. The outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference establishes the creation of Sustainable Development Goals. Concurrently, the work on the post-2015 development agenda following the MDGs has begun. Finland considers it important that the process of setting Sustainable Development Goals and that the post-2015 development agenda be brought together and result in a single set of
universal goals, which cover in a balanced way the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental dimensions. The aim is to establish a framework of goals and targets for all countries which strives for the eradication of poverty within planetary boundaries.

Finland’s priorities in the coming years include the attainment of a solid post-2015 development agenda so as to advance sustainable development, securing the financing base for sustainable development, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of operational field-level development activities of the UN, developing humanitarian assistance, environmental protection, climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as managing natural resources in a sustainable and proper manner.

A sound and comprehensive post-2015 development agenda as a goal

The Millennium Development Goals united the development efforts of the international community and created a common set of progress measurement tools. The most important development policy process for the coming years involves the UN-led review of MDGs and the adoption of new goals.

Within the UN Finland works towards the integration of the dimensions of sustainable development, striving for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. The aim is to establish a framework of goals and targets for all countries which strives for the eradication of poverty within planetary boundaries. Important goals from Finland’s viewpoint are included in the report of the high-level panel set by the Secretary-General, published in May 2013. The Secretary-General will present his report to the General Assembly in the autumn of 2013.

The goals of the framework should be limited in number, measurable and easy to communicate. They should take into account the level of development and the internal situations in the respective countries. Strong local ownership in developing countries is an important factor for Finland when the new goals are being negotiated and implemented.
In the new framework Finland emphasises the central themes of its development policy which also include the spearhead themes in the UN Strategy. Finland advances these objectives especially through the EU, together with the other Nordic countries, by establishing different partnerships and, when necessary, on a national basis.

In addition, the future framework should include topics related to human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, democracy and the rule of law as well as other structures in society. It should also reduce inequality, promote gender equality and take into account the needs of vulnerable groups. Development should also address issues related to peace and security, and conflicts and violence.

Finland’s development perspective also encompasses several other objectives which entail, inter alia, sustainable management of natural resources, better mobilisation of local resources in developing countries and increased corporate social responsibility in developing countries. Finland also strives for a better consideration of water and sanitation issues, including their links to other sectors such as energy, food safety and health. The future development agenda should also take into account policy coherence for development.

**Strengthening the financing base for sustainable development**

Finland has committed to increase its development funding to 0.7% of the gross national income (GNI) by 2015. Simultaneously Finland endorses action which expands the financing base in a way that makes financial resources increasingly available along with the Official Development Assistance (ODA). As its point of departure Finland believes that it is important to: boost the partner countries’ own domestic resources through, among other things, international trade and investments; to develop national taxation systems and tax revenue collection; and to tackle unregulated capital flight. The goal is to put an end to the aid dependency of developing countries. In order to increase domestic funding Finland supports the trading capacity of developing countries and investment environment reform. In addition, Finland advances
public-private partnerships and the introduction of new, innovative financing instruments. Finland continues to present the themes of wider development financing at different UN fora in other ways as well.

Finland emphasises the significance of sustainable and accountable business investments in creating economic and social development, and supports the work for an international investment regime. Within the framework of the Helsinki Process Finland continues the multi-stakeholder dialogue it launched with regard to questions associated with the investment regime.

Finland focuses attention on international taxation questions in the UN as well, including associated negative phenomena (illicit financial flows, tax havens and transfer pricing issues). Finland also actively pursues solutions, among other things, for the expansion of the financing base for sustainable development. Finland is looking for ways to strengthen the role and functions of the UN tax committee.

**Making operational development cooperation more efficient and effective**

In accordance with the Government Programme Finland will enhance its involvement in and contribution to multilateral cooperation and act within them in a more goal-oriented and strategic manner. Funding will be concentrated in those organisations and financing institutions which can generate the best possible results in Finland’s development cooperation priority areas. The strategic analysis of multilateral development cooperation, commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA), will be used in support of this process. Wielding influence in UN specialised agencies, funds and programmes will be sharpened through special strategies. Likewise, influencing will also be strengthened in development banks. Finland’s objective is for organisations to operate as effectively as possible towards the eradication of poverty and reduction of inequality. Finland also highlights the principles of effective management and accountability.

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3 United Nations Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters
The capacity of the UN to alleviate human suffering in disasters is improving

The UN has the leading role in coordinating humanitarian assistance. In order to effectively deliver humanitarian aid to those who need it the UN-led international humanitarian assistance system must be suitably prepared and well-coordinated. In the future more attention must be paid to good management, the quality of partnerships, the assessment of effectiveness and accountability, and promoting the smooth cooperation of the entire UN system during disasters.

Finland channels the lion’s share of its humanitarian assistance in a concentrated manner through the UN system. In accordance with the principles of good humanitarian donorship Finland highlights the importance of multilateral cooperation, and the primacy of the UN system as a humanitarian actor. Finland actively endorses the system-wide reforms in UN humanitarian assistance to make it more effective. Finland’s goal is to guarantee the humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence of humanitarian assistance even when military and civil defence resources are being used in support of humanitarian missions. The most important channel for wielding influence is Finland’s direct participation on the boards of UN bodies that implement humanitarian assistance.

Protecting the environment, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and sustainable and proper management of natural resources

There is a clear link between poverty eradication and the state of the environment. The livelihoods and food security of 70 per cent of the world’s poor directly depend on biodiversity and ecosystem services. The poorest are the first to suffer from the declining state of the environment, for example because of deteriorating food security or natural disasters.

In the UN Finland endorses the developing countries’ efforts in integrating environmental sustainability requirements and global environmental challenges into their own development plans which
are needed for a transformation towards an inclusive and job-creating green economy, human well-being and social equality.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation are fateful issues for humankind. Failing to mitigate climate change can endanger all social and development goals. Finland actively and constructively pursues a better capacity for the UN and the international system in achieving the necessary results in climate talks. Finland promotes the inclusion of the linkage between climate change and gender issues in the future climate agreement.

In the UN Finland attempts to respond to global environmental threats, and especially, climate change, loss of biodiversity and desertification by, inter alia, applying an ecosystem-based approach in climate change adaptation. Finland significantly supports international environmental funding, including climate funding.

Sustainable and global energy solutions are key development questions in which the UN must play an important role. Through the UN system Finland contributes to sustainable access to renewables as well as energy and material efficiency.

The sustainable and proper management of natural resources is a central development topic. The sustainable use of natural resources can permanently extricate developing countries from poverty. It is imperative to facilitate the equitable distribution of the benefits of natural resources, so that the entire society profits from the development. Through the UN system Finland promotes the means for livelihood of local communities, indigenous peoples and different minorities, as well as their prospects for participating in decision-making on the use and management of natural resources.

It is in Finland’s interests to bring forth through the UN system the development prospects for all countries made available by a green and inclusive economy, and to especially let the developing countries benefit from it.
Finland also emphasises the importance and role of forests at the local and regional level, among other things, as the base for diverse agriculture and food security, and global benefits stemming from, among other things, the protection of biodiversity and combating climate change. The adverse effects of poor water supply and sanitation are extensive. Finland actively promotes and supports the achievement of the sanitation target by the 2015 deadline.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1: AN OVERVIEW OF FINLAND’S ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UN

INTERNATIONAL OPERATING ENVIRONMENT IN FLUX

The United Nations (UN) is the only international organisation whose membership encompasses almost all of the states of the world, and whose scope of activities is wide-ranging in the different sectors of international cooperation. Furthermore, the esteem and approval of the UN and its work has remained at a high level among the member states and their citizens.

Security is a central function of the UN, both in the narrow sense (authorising the use of force) – and in the wider sense (human security with all of its dimensions). The international environment’s transformation brings new challenges to the UN system. The transformation is affected, inter alia, by great power relations, the emergence of new economic and political hubs from within the cadre of developing countries, and new global security threats. Along with traditional peacekeeping operations, development and human rights tasks the UN is expected to provide answers and responses to problems such as climate change, the spread of communicable diseases, terrorism, crime, natural disasters and migration which, in the wider sense, are associated with security and sustainable development. At the same time, international cooperation is fragmented. Even though states have remained the primary actors in the UN system – a principle which is predominately emphasised by many developing countries – the clout of private actors (companies, organisations, funds) has increased specifically in the development
policy sector, while at the same time growth in public development cooperation financing has stalled. Most poor people today live in developing states, which is an indicator of unbalanced economic growth. Owing to rapid population growth approximately one half of the world’s population is under 30 years of age. Young people are a considerable resource, and their potential and needs must be taken into account in public decision-making. Fragile states, suffering from conflict and underdevelopment, pose a special challenge to the UN system, as the vast majority of the world’s conflicts these days occur within states, rather than between them.

In order for the UN to be able to meet these new challenges its structures and practices must be improved and remodelled. In practice this translates into a reform, one which will not be realised without the common political desire of the member states of the UN. The strongest pressure for reform is directed at the composition of the Security Council. The industrialised countries, having long dominated the UN, have had to face the fact that they can no longer influence decisions the way they did before, for example on human rights matters or the environmental policy sector. At the same time the developing countries are demanding more options for participation, especially in the Security Council. Correspondingly, stronger political and economic contribution in the attempts to solve global challenges is asked from the emerging countries. So, in order to meet the new, shared, global challenges the collective membership of the UN must achieve consensus on the organisation’s future structures, direction and required resources. Should the UN fail to meet these new challenges because of internal discord or insufficient resources, the organisation risks losing its importance and authority. Another good reason for strengthening the UN is the fact that various smaller groupings exclude a large number of the world’s nations, which diminishes their democratic representativeness.

Of the new actors the Group of Twenty (G20) has spearheaded the pursuit of stabilisation of the world economy and especially the international financial markets after they fell into a crisis in the autumn of 2008. The Pittsburgh Summit in September 2009 helped consolidate
the role of the G20, and the participants designated the Group as the premier forum for international economic cooperation. In practice, the G20 has proved to be important to the development of international cooperation, to forming its agenda and positions. The Group operates under a rotating presidency, and the preparation and implementation of matters depend on the action of its member states and cooperation with international organisations in different sectors.

The Group of Eight (G8), representing the traditional large industrialised countries, has continued its work. Nowadays it also addresses questions related to international peace and security and human rights. The Group of Five (G5) (Brazil, South Africa, India, China and Mexico) has come alongside the G8. The BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) continue to raise their profile: the main themes of their meetings have included the prospects of the global economy, the need to reform financing institutions and the intensification of cooperation between emerging countries.

Some non-G20 member states of the UN have wanted to promote better interaction and avoid unnecessary duplication between the G20 and the UN, and other international organisations: in doing so they have invoked the recommendations of the 2011 report ‘Governance for growth’ put forth by David Cameron, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, among others. Approximately 30 countries representing different groups and continents belong to the open and informal Global Governance Group (3G). The Singapore-led 3G operates in conjunction with the permanent missions operating in New York. Finland joined the Group in September 2011. The Group actively monitors questions associated with global governance and aims at strengthening the role of the UN in such issues. The Group has given joint statements and issued press announcements.

The European Union (EU) is the key channel of influence in Finland’s UN policy. The EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) has evolved and changed in the aftermath of the Lisbon Treaty’s entry into force. Nonetheless, the CFSP has not developed in the way Finland had hoped. This relates particularly to the EU’s action in the UN. Since
the EU is one of the strongest supporters and donors of the UN, more determined leadership could be expected of it in the UN. This, however, requires a willingness of the EU’s Member States to give visibility and a prominent role to the EU in different UN venues. The strengthening of global governance and multilateral cooperation, and new strategic partnerships are increasingly important to the EU’s external relations as well.

Nordic cooperation in UN-related matters aims at advancing the countries’ common values and their influence. This cooperation continues and improves between the Nordic capitals and in UN cities. There is a desire to cultivate and intensify the shared value base, tapping into the traditional resources of Nordic cooperation.

**FINLAND AND THE UN**

Finland, as a member state of the UN, is committed to the goals of the UN Charter. Finland regards the UN as the most important instrument of global multilateral cooperation and wants to strengthen its role and capabilities as regards better management of globalisation. This basic premise describing Finland’s action in the UN is mentioned in the Government Programme. The section that describes foreign, security and defence policy states the following:

“The United Nations is the cornerstone of the global multilateral system and cooperation... The Government works to improve the UN’s legitimacy and capacity to act. Finland pursues a proactive UN policy and will invest in crisis prevention and peace-building in particular, as well as in the promotion of human rights and the rule of law.”

UN action rests on three pillars: peace and security, development and human rights. The guidelines related to these sectors are also given in the Government Programme.
“The aim of Finland’s foreign policy is to strengthen international stability, security, peace, justice and sustainable development as well as promote the rule of law, democracy and human rights.

Participation in crisis management missions supports the restoration of security and stability in crisis situations, while strengthening our own defence capability and enhancing Finland’s weight in international politics... Finland also emphasises the participation of women in crisis management and peacebuilding... Finland will also devote particular attention to civilian crisis management... The Government will develop Finland’s contribution to international peace mediation activities and crisis prevention.

Development policy is a key element of a coherent and comprehensive foreign and security policy. Poverty reduction and the achievement of the UN millennium development goals (MDGs), placing an emphasis on partner countries’ needs and ownership, are the first priorities of the development policy... The Government’s goal is to ensure stable development of appropriations, leading to the target level 0.7% share of GDP and meeting Finland’s international commitments.

In its own development cooperation, Finland emphasises the rule of law, democracy, human rights and sustainable development... In these activities, Finland builds on its strengths in the educational sector, health promotion, communications and environmental technology, and good governance.”

It is in Finland’s interests to bolster the UN’s capability to act and to actively participate in reforming the UN, in accordance with Finland’s national goals and as a Member State of the EU. This new, revised UN Strategy, which builds on the Government Programme, endeavours to strengthen the effectiveness of Finland’s UN policy and update the goals presented in the UN Strategy of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, adopted in 2008. The goals were updated partly because of the transformation in the international operating environment, mentioned in the previous chapter, and because of the development within the
UN system. Likewise, the Government reports on foreign and security policy (2012) and human rights policy, the Human Rights Strategy and the Development Policy Programme (2012) steer the decision-making as regards the main agenda of Finland’s UN policy. The guidelines and goals in the Development Policy Programme provide the central framework for the targeting of Finland’s development cooperation funding. The UN Strategy supports and complements these steering documents.

**FINLAND’S ACTIVITIES AND GOALS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UN**

The point of departure for Finland’s UN policy is the close interrelationship of peace and security, human rights and development. None of them can separately materialise in a sustainable manner. Finland considers it important that peace and security, human rights and development be even-handedly developed and resourced in the UN. This approach is also in line with the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

The Government Security and Defence Policy Report (2012) notes the impact of the changes in the security environment to global governance and the efforts to change the structures of the international system. The significance of commonly accepted rules and procedures is growing, and the importance of the United Nations (UN) as the sole world organisation is accentuated. The UN Security Council has a central role in authorising universally binding international decisions.

The Government’s Development Policy Programme also states that Finland highlights the comprehensive concept of security which strengthens the interrelationship of stability, security, peace, justice and sustainable development, the rule of law, democracy and human rights.

The goals of Finland’s UN policy in this narrative are presented as three distinct entities: 1) peace and security, 2) international development issues, and 3) promoting human rights and the rule of law.
In addition, international law, humanitarian assistance, action within the most important UN specialised agencies and UN reform appear as distinct elements.

**Peace and security**

Conflict prevention, military and civilian crisis management, peacebuilding and development cooperation form a continuum, in the different stages of which the UN must apply the best possible approaches and instruments that suit the situation at hand.

Finland supports the comprehensive approach, widely accepted in the UN, in which conflict prevention is closely associated with peacebuilding and development. Finland advocates the development of UN structures that focus on conflict prevention, including the strengthening of their normative base. Finland underscores the importance of cooperation between the UN and regional organisations in conflict prevention. This applies, inter alia, to EU-UN cooperation in the sector of peace and security, and to the capabilities of regional organisations in solving security-related issues in their respective regions, such as in Africa.

**Influencing the Security Council**

When it comes to questions related to international peace and security the Security Council is the most important decision-making body. When necessary, the Council can authorise peacemaking or the use of force to prevent situations that endanger peace. In practice the Security Council’s capability to act depends on the collective political resolve of its members – especially its permanent members. This resolve is prone to vacillation, exemplified by the civil war in Syria which began in 2011: the Security Council has failed in the attempts to resolve the crisis.

Despite determined efforts Finland was not elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in October 2012. Finland intends to continue its active participation as regards questions being addressed
in the Security Council, within the realm of possibilities awarded to non-Security Council members. Finland supports the familiarisation of non-permanent members into the practices of the Security Council; Finland’s UN mission in New York arranges annual seminars on this. Finland intends to stand for non-permanent membership in the Security Council also in the future.

The Security Council does not only deal with decisions related to the use of force. The Council is also a permanent channel for diplomatic talks and contacts; it expresses the stands of the international community through its statements, launches peacekeeping missions and imposes sanctions. The resolutions of the Council, many of which are legally binding to the member states, impact all countries. With regard to regional questions the work of the Council affects, inter alia, the decisions taken under the auspices of the EU’s CFSP, for example, by way of operations that support the peacekeeping operations of the EU or the UN. Therefore, also Finland must closely monitor the work of the Council and influence it when it comes to issues important to Finland.

The Council continually organises open debates on topical issues related to international peace and security. Finland participates in these debates through high-level national representation or in cooperation with the other Nordic countries through joint Nordic statements or via the EU. For example, themes such as ‘Women, Peace and Security’, the protection of civilians, counter-terrorist action and the prevention of proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction are topics addressed by the Security Council on which Finland already possesses expertise and credibility accrued through other activities. Finland applauds the development in recent years in accordance with which the Security Council will also handle thematic security issues during its sessions. Through an effective network of relationships Finland can also directly influence the members of the Security Council – above all when SC Resolutions are being prepared.

Sanctions are a central element in the work of the Security Council in maintaining and restoring peace and security. International sanctions
regimes are constantly being developed and Finland participates in and influences this activity together with like-minded countries, and through the EU. Finland has especially wanted to ensure that the aspects associated with the protection of law and legal safeguards are adequately taken into account in international sanctions policy.

Finland highlights the significance of the capacity and efficiency of the Security Council in solving international crises. Finland supports Security Council reform and positively regards increasing the Security Council’s permanent membership with African countries, for example. However, Finland does not support an extension of the right of veto. When it comes to the Council’s working methods Finland, above all, emphasises the significance of preventive action and increasing transparency in the Council. Finland believes that the contacts between the Council and different UN actors (e.g. the High Commissioner for Human Rights), the International Criminal Court (ICC) and regional organisations must be further developed.

- Finland influences the work of the Security Council by directly participating in the Council’s open discussions at a high level as well as through the Nordic Countries or the EU. Furthermore, Finland influences the members of the SC through bilateral communication.

- Finland concentrates on themes in which it possesses expertise and credibility.

- Finland participates in the debate on SC reform, and endeavours to promote the Council’s efficiency and transparency.

- Finland continues to organise annual orientation workshops for newly-elected members of the Security Council.

- Finland intends to stand for non-permanent membership in the Security Council also in the future.
Mediation

In recent years mediation has acquired newfound standing in the core of UN action; Finland has played a prominent role in this. On the joint initiative of Finland and Turkey, in the summer of 2011 the General Assembly unanimously adopted the first ever resolution on mediation in the UN system, which strengthened the status of mediation in the UN and clarified the role of the UN in relation to other actors in the field of mediation. At the same time it helped institutionalise Finland’s own mediation activities. Finland’s Action Plan on Mediation, published in 2011, presents concrete means and goals for Finland to bolster its mediation expertise. Mediation is also one of the priority areas in Finland’s UN policy which will receive considerable attention in the future.

The UN is a very important mediator and a strong actor in developing a normative and institutional base for mediation. Chapter VI of the UN Charter lays the foundation for mediation and the good offices of the Secretary-General. Through its own activities Finland endeavours to further improve the mediation capacity of the UN, including the political and financial support bestowed by its member states.

The first resolution on mediation strengthened the principles of UN mediation support and promoted the development of coordination and cooperation between the UN, its member states and regional organisations. The Secretary-General’s report on the implementation of the resolution and especially its annex ‘Guidance for Effective Mediation’ create excellent groundwork on which to rely. The follow-on resolution which raised mediation to the permanent agenda of the General Assembly was adopted in September 2012.

The Group of Friends of Mediation founded in the autumn of 2010 on the initiative of Finland and Turkey develops and makes international mediation more visible, particularly in the UN and among regional organisations. The Group brings together new and old countries that have experience or interest in mediation for the purpose of sharing
lessons learned and best practices as well as to intensify mutual cooperation. The Group already encompasses nearly 40 states, the UN and 7 regional organisations. Particularly prominent on its present agenda are the strengthening of the financing base of mediation and the consolidation of resources. Financial contributions to UN mediation are given on a voluntary base at present. Finland is one of the biggest donors of this activity.

The Group mainly convenes in New York at the ambassadorial and expert level. The Group’s ministerial meetings are regularly organised during the week of the high-level meetings of the General Assembly. The Group’s network of Focal Points in the capitals of the members provides an important link between the UN level and the national level.

Finland supports the work of the Mediation Support Unit (MSU), which was established in 2006. The MSU steers mediation-related activities in the UN. The MSU is the central hub of planning, developing and implementing mediation within the United Nations system. It also maintains a Standby Team of Mediation Experts. Finland’s support to the MSU has been focused, inter alia, on backing the Standby Team and strengthening the role of women in mediation. Furthermore, Finland’s development cooperation funds have been used to sponsor a Junior Professional Officer to the MSU.

The UN continues to promote mediation along with the activities of the Group of Friends of Mediation, among other things, by focusing as much attention as possible on the mandates of UN operations and Special Representatives of the UN from the standpoint of mediation. In particular the role of women in peace processes and appointing women as mediators must be increased, and the implementation of SC Resolution 1325 ‘Women, Peace and Security’ must be intensified. Finland, together with the MSU and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, supports the ‘Gender and Mediation’ high-level seminars, which is intended to include the gender perspective in all peace processes. Finland also hopes to be able to have Finns in mediation tasks and as special representatives within the UN system.
In its mediation activities Finland promotes solutions that create sustainable peace by homing in on the causes of conflict. Finland pays particular attention to the development of fragile states during the first few years that follow a peace agreement.

- Finland, together with Turkey and the Group of Friends of Mediation, continues to be active in the field of mediation in the UN.

- Finland supports the strengthening of mediation in the UN. The Group of Friends of Mediation can generate additional guidance, organise high-level events and maintain an active debate on the prospects and challenges of mediation.

- Finland continues its funding to the MSU, and develops possible new forms of cooperation, for example in training.

- Finland strives for a more versatile financing base for mediation: in addition to the western industrialised nations, other countries too should provide voluntary financing to it. The long-term goal is to make financing a part of the UN’s regular budget.

- Finland also continues its support to other international actors, especially to regional organisations, and promotes their cooperation within the framework of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

- Finland works closely with the other Nordic countries to promote mediation. An example of this is the Nordic mediation network.

**Responsibility to Protect**

The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) is written in the political declaration issued by the member states of the UN, according to which ‘each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity’, and that the ‘international community should, as appropriate, encourage States to exercise this responsibility… and be prepared to take collective
action’. In the 2005 World Summit Outcome the General Assembly adopted the Responsibility to Protect as an overarching concept, limiting its application to the aforementioned crimes.

The Responsibility to Protect is a political concept, rather than a legal one. In the legal sense the R2P relates to the already existing powers and obligations of the UN member states. Any added value that the R2P brings can be assessed by how well it motivates the Security Council to make timely decisions and strengthen the readiness of states for cooperation in preventing the crimes under the umbrella of the concept. The Responsibility to Protect is still a somewhat controversial concept, especially among countries that emphasise the sovereignty of states, but its significance as the central norm of international politics continues to grow.

Finland supports the consolidation of the Responsibility to Protect and the putting of it into practice both nationally and internationally. In the implementation of the R2P Finland lays emphasis on prevention. Strengthening the civil society and the structures associated with the rule of law, promoting human rights and taking better account of analyses generated by human rights bodies play a central role in this. Finland deems it important to dispel the suspicions and misunderstandings associated with the R2P. The Responsibility to Protect is often viewed too narrowly, solely through the perspective of military intervention. It is important to highlight that the military dimension is only one of R2P’s dimensions, that preventative actions are the R2P’s primary mission, and that the R2P principle has not expanded the criteria for the right to use force.

Finland closely monitors the development of the Responsibility to Protect. The Secretary-General of the UN issues annual reports on the R2P. Finland strives to affect the content of the report during the early stages of drafting, and actively participates in the associated debate in the General Assembly. Finland has appointed a national R2P Focal Point through whom Finland participates in the activities of the R2P Focal Point network.
• In its UN policy Finland increasingly emphasises the consolidation of and international support for the Responsibility to Protect. Finland also aims to build bridges with countries that have taken a critical view on the R2P.

• Through its Focal Point network Finland monitors the development of the Responsibility to Protect. Finland also supports the consolidation of the R2P, including putting it into practice, both nationally and internationally.

• Finland underscores the significance of prevention. Among other things mediation plays an important role in this.

Supporting peacekeeping

Approximately 100 000 military and 20 000 civilian personnel participate in UN peacekeeping operations (June 2013). The biggest troop contributing countries are Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, Ethiopia and Nigeria. The annual peacekeeping budget is approximately USD 7.3 billion. The countries contributing the largest sums are the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany and France. In recent years, diverging opinions over monitoring and developing the activity have emerged between developing countries that contribute troops and industrialised countries that finance the operations. Peacekeeping faces political, financial and security-related challenges.

UN peacekeeping has become all the more comprehensive, and the missions range from crisis prevention, actual peacekeeping and even peace enforcement to post-conflict stabilisation and peacebuilding. The so-called UN integrated missions serve as an example of a comprehensive approach which takes into account the association of military and civilian action with security and development. Reforming the target country’s own security sector (Security Sector Reform, SSR) and strengthening the rule of law is often a prerequisite for sustainable peace. Finland supports the activities of the UN and the intensification of international cooperation in the security sector.
Finland holds the opinion that the UN plays a central role in international crisis management. Finland intends to continue participating in UN-mandated peacekeeping operations, be they led by the UN or some other organisation (NATO, the EU). The UN-led peacekeeping operation UNIFIL in Lebanon is a good example of this. Finland has participated in it as of the spring 2012. In November 2013 the size of Finland’s contingent will increase to 350 troops when Finland assumes the lead nation role in the Finnish-Irish battalion in operation UNIFIL. By participating in peacekeeping activities Finland, for its part, supports international peace and security. Through its participation Finland can also influence the development of peacekeeping activities and, concurrently, receive valuable experience for the purpose of developing its own crisis management capacity. Finland’s input into crisis management also impacts our international standing and serves Finland’s needs in obtaining information from crisis areas.

The Nordic countries are firmly committed to a closer cooperation in UN peacekeeping. The Nordic countries have charted different ways to generate synergies and mutually complementing action. They are also planning to come up with joint funding in support of projects implemented by the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

UN cooperation with regional organisations in crisis management has further developed in recent years: Finland especially supports the intensification of UN cooperation with the EU, the Organization of Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), NATO and the African Union (AU). This applies to cooperation at the political and field operation levels alike. EU-UN cooperation, including its shared goals, has especially aimed at improving the comprehensive crisis management capabilities and SSR of African countries.

When it comes to civilian crisis management Finland can offer training services to the UN. Finland is also prepared to participate in future UN operations by seconding experts from different fields, such as police officers (also female police officers). Finnish police officers
possess special expertise in advisory, assistance and training tasks in the target country. These areas are relevant from the standpoint of UN peacekeeping activities. In December 2012 the UN member states decided to establish the Group of Friends of UN Police. Participation in the Group provides Finland with an excellent channel in influencing UN police action. Finland also engages in Nordic cooperation as regards UN civilian crisis management and, together with the other Nordic countries, Finland has supported bolstering the civilian capacities of the UN. Crisis Management Centre Finland cooperates with the different agencies of the UN in the field of civilian crisis management training. Its partners include the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the World Food Programme (WFP). Training cooperation will be intensified and made more versatile.

- Finland underscores the central role of the UN in international crisis management and continues to participate in UN peacekeeping operations and in the development of peacekeeping.

- Finland supports the intensification of cooperation between the UN and regional organisations in crisis management-related issues.

- Finland offers training and expert assistance to the UN, among other things, in police missions.

**Strengthening the Special Political Missions (SPM) in UN crisis management and peacebuilding**

A dominant characteristic of UN field operations in the 2000s is the growing importance of Special Political Missions alongside traditional peacekeeping operations. This also translates into a higher status for civilian crisis management in the UN. The underlying causes include financial constraints and political pressures to reduce the footprint of the UN. Even though traditional peacekeeping activities are still in much demand, and on the rise in recent times as well, it is obvious that the significance of Special Political Missions alongside peacekeeping operations will increase.
Conceptual thinking associated with Special Political Missions is still in its early stages. In 2012, on the initiative of Mexico and strongly supported by Finland, the UN adopted Resolution A/RES/67/123: ‘Comprehensive review of Special Political Missions (SPM)’. It was the first time when a resolution asked the Secretary-General to produce a report on the topic, and it provided an opportunity for discussing the topic as a political question in the General Assembly. The report and the associated debate will eventually shape the future of UN-centred field operations. This also has connections with questions related to wider UN reform such as coordination within the Secretariat, political decision-making and cost-sharing.

Special Political Missions have proved to be an effective manner of flexibly responding to extremely divergent situations and – unlike peacekeeping operations – they can be employed in any cycle of a conflict. SPMs are very cost-effective and their goal is to identify sustainable solutions. Due to administrative and budgetary grounds Special Political Missions incorporate disparate missions which, in Finnish terminology, can be best described as civilian crisis management operations. In addition, most of them are closely associated with mediation, or are just that.

In conjunction with Special Political Missions attention should be focused on various early-warning systems. Human rights violations, for instance, may serve as a harbinger, portending a crisis brewing.

Finland has closely cooperated with Mexico in the development of Special Political Missions. Based on this cooperation it is possible for Finland to establish an even more extensive partnership with Mexico, which is a very important player in the multilateral arena.

- Finland supports the development of wide-ranging UN Special Political Missions, so as to make the response of the UN to various crises more effective and flexible.
Implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 ‘Women, Peace and Security’

Promoting the realisation of women’s rights and, hence, improving the status of women is a cross-cutting theme in Finland’s UN policy. Finland consistently supports the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, “Women, Peace and Security”, both internationally and domestically. In its international cooperation Finland focuses attention on the visibility of the 1325 theme, and on its inclusion in common announcements and documents. The revolutionary idea in the resolution is the fact that women and girls are no longer considered as just victims: they are also active contributors whose participation in peace negotiations, peacebuilding and conflict prevention is a precondition for sustainable peace.

Finland was in the vanguard of nations in adopting its own 1325 National Action Plan in 2008. The theme ‘Women, Peace and Security’ is one of the priorities in Finland’s foreign policy. The new Action Plan for 2012-2016 was taken into use in June 2012: it takes into account international development and facilitates improved monitoring of goals through the use of different indicators. A follow-up group led by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will continue to monitor the realisation of the Action Plan and the implementation of goals. The follow-up group comprises the representatives of ministries, research institutions and NGOs.

Finland promotes the realisation of gender equality and increasing the number of women in UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations and Special Political Missions as well as improving UN gender-equality training for peacekeepers and implementing the gender-equality guidelines for UN military peacekeeping personnel⁴, published in 2010. Moreover, Finland aims at providing training on the goals and implementation on Resolution 1325 to all Finns to be deployed to crisis management or peacekeeping missions. In promoting mediation Finland

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⁴ ‘Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the United Nations Military in Peacekeeping Operations’, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, March 2010
has focused special attention on the role of women in peace processes. Finland considers it important that Resolution 1325 can increasingly facilitate the fight against sexual violence in conflicts as well. Finland strives to exert influence on the Security Council so that it systematically takes the gender perspective and women’s rights into account in all country-specific action.

- Finland promotes the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 ‘Women, Peace and Security’, and actively supports the strengthening of the role of women in peace processes.

- Finland, at national and international levels, focuses attention on the visibility of the 1325 theme, and on its inclusion in common statements and documents.

- Finland exerts influence on the Security Council so as to systematically include the gender perspective and women’s rights in all country-specific action.

**Improving arms control and disarmament**

Armed conflict constitutes a major impediment for global development. Arms control is an element in the wider enterprises of promoting development, human rights, peace, international humanitarian law and other elements of human security. Finland emphasises the prevention of armed violence so as to achieve sustainable development.

The UN plays a central role in multilateral arms control and disarmament. The First Committee of the General Assembly deals with disarmament and security issues that affect the international community. Finland chaired the Committee’s 2011-2012 session. Finland holds that the capacity of the UN system to see to the implementation of international arms control and disarmament treaties must be secured. Consequently, Finland supports the elimination of shortcomings in the monitoring and verification of treaty regimes.
Finland supports the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva and the efforts to restart its activities. Should the paralysis in the CD continue, it is presumable that the pressure to take arms control and disarmament talks elsewhere will grow. Finland, having traditionally emphasised a strong role for the UN, would not take a favourable view on taking the negotiations to non-UN fora, akin to the Oslo and Ottawa processes.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be the cornerstone of the international arms control regime and the most important venue in building confidence between the nuclear and non-nuclear states. It creates a commonly adopted framework for nuclear non-proliferation, the peaceful use of nuclear energy and nuclear disarmament. Nuclear disarmament actions (of nuclear powers) and the non-nuclear states’ commitment to nuclear non-proliferation bolster the framework. At the same time the actions of the nuclear powers give a strong signal as regards the commitment of non-nuclear states. Finland actively supports the implementation of the decisions taken at the NPT review conference in 2010 while preparing for the next review conference in 2015. In accordance with the decisions of the 2010 conference, there is an attempt to organise a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. In 2011 Finland was designated to host the conference, which can be done as soon as the conditions for convening it come about.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an independent agency within the UN system. The NPT assigns it a crucial role in administering safeguards for fissionable materials. The IAEA also carries out controls in countries outside the NPT.

One of the most severe security threats involves WMDs and associated materials falling into the hands of terrorists or other uncontrollable parties. Finland supports the central role of the UN in preventing the proliferation of WMDs, and the implementation of SC Resolution 1540. The implementation of said resolution is supported in many ways
and at several fora, also outside the UN system. Such fora include the ‘Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism’ (GICNT), launched by the United States and Russia, the plenary meeting of which Finland will host in 2015 as well as the ‘Global Partnership’ created by the G8 in 2002, which Finland joined in 2003. In addition to the G8 countries this programme aimed against the spread of weapons and materials of mass destruction encompasses 25 partner countries.

Questions related to small arms and other conventional weapons are increasingly important in multilateral arms control efforts. Finland, who has been in the core group promoting the international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in the UN, will continue to champion the goals of the process. One of the most important arms control instruments associated with conventional weapons is the UN Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) programme. Finland endeavours to strengthen the role of the UN in preventing small arms proliferation by supporting this programme. The effective implementation of the SALW programme continues to be a major challenge for the member states.

The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty by the General Assembly in April 2013 also served as an example of a successful negotiation process in the UN. The strong support of the UN membership legitimised the Treaty and anchored it into the bedrock of other international treaties. The ATT is the first international treaty that addresses trade in conventional weapons, setting high common standards for the trade. Concurrently, the Treaty aims to prevent the transfer of weapons into the illicit trade. In the final analysis the purpose of the Treaty is to prevent the human suffering caused by armed conflict and the illicit arms trade.

- Finland supports the central role of the UN in arms control, disarmament and prevention of the proliferation of WMDs.
- Finland actively supports the implementation of the decisions taken at the NPT review conference in 2010 while preparing for the next review conference in 2015, the implementation of SC Resolution 1540, and the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
• The international Arms Trade Treaty was adopted in April 2013 and Finland advances its entry into force as expediently as possible by promoting signatures and ratifications. Finland, among the first to do so, signed the Treaty on 3 June 2013 and aims to ratify it as soon as possible.

• Finland promotes the non-proliferation of small arms by supporting the UN Small Arms and Light Weapons programme.

Supporting counter-terrorism

When it comes to counter-terrorism, Finland supports the work of the UN in creating a general legislative framework and in monitoring the implementation of international obligations. Finland endorses the widest possible ratification of the United Nations Conventions on Terrorism, and maintains that they create a solid foundation in international law to counter-terrorist cooperation. Finland has ratified the UN Conventions on Terrorism and is in the process of preparing to ratify their latest amendments. The effective implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and consensus on a comprehensive counter-terrorism convention are the key goals in this sector. They are also highlighted in EU cooperation.

Finland stresses that all counter-terrorist action must comply with international law, including human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law. This perspective must be kept in focus while developing the provisions for international counter-terrorism and a counter-terrorist sanctions regime. One of the most important areas in international cooperation involves bringing the perpetrators of terrorist acts to justice. This is supplemented, inter alia, by counter-terrorist sanctions and other preventive action.

Finland believes that the work of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, including the country-specific action of its Secretariat, is useful in attempting to ensure the implementation of the key SC Resolutions among the member states.
The underlying causes of terrorism must also be dealt with through political and human rights dialogue as well as development cooperation. Finland supports the United Nations Alliance of Civilization (AOC), established on the initiative of the Secretary-General, which as a promoter of cooperative relations across cultures and religions particularly endeavours to alleviate tension and confrontation between the Islamic world and the so-called West, and also aims to strengthen dialogue and cooperation globally, regionally and locally. The activities of the AOC are focused on youth, the media, migration, and associated education and training.

- Finland endorses the widest possible ratification of United Nations Conventions on Terrorism and the effective implementation of the 2006 United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

- Finland advocates respect for human rights law, humanitarian law and refugee law in counter-terrorist action and conventions.

- In its own counter-terrorist action, including its development, Finland takes into account the key guidelines and recommendations of the UN.

- In cross-cultural and interreligious dialogue Finland supports the action of the United Nations Alliance of Civilization, including its work on youth in North Africa and the Middle East.

**Sanctions**

Sanctions imposed by the Security Council are important instruments in maintaining and restoring international peace and security. Finland actively participates in the development of international sanctions regimes and endeavours to promote the materialisation of human rights and legal protection as a basic element of an effective and legitimate sanctions policy. At the UN level legal protection is especially promoted as part of the work of the Group of Like-Minded States on Targeted Sanctions which continues to improve the practices and the
Ombudsperson system of the Security Council’s Al-Qaeda Sanctions Committee, and gradually migrate its improvements to other sanctions regimes as well.

- Finland participates in the development of international sanctions regimes and promotes the realisation of human rights and legal protection in international sanctions policy.

- Finland supports the effective application of targeted sanctions which take into account their humanitarian impacts.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

The UN is the central channel through which Finland implements its development policy. In accordance with the Government Programme Finland will enhance its involvement in and contribution to multilateral cooperation, emphasising coherence and effectiveness in its action within them. Finland’s development policy and development cooperation build on the Government’s Development Policy Programme, adopted in 2012. A human rights-based development policy complies with internationally accepted principles and practices which improve aid effectiveness and results, coherence and transparency in development cooperation as well as underscore local ownership in developing countries and the responsibility of the local population for their development. Finland promotes effectiveness and coherence of the UN, as well as the other priority areas of the Development Policy Programme, including the cross-cutting themes, i.e. promoting gender equality and reducing inequality, and climate sustainability.

Finland is committed to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and actively participates in preparing the post-2015 development goals at the national level, in the EU and the UN. Finland supports the leading role of the UN in drafting the post-2015 development agenda so as to make it possible to get all countries to participate and commit to the common goals as firmly as possible. Finland emphasises local ownership
of developing countries and the significance of dialogue regarding the new development agenda. Finland favours a single set of commonly adopted Sustainable Development Goals and updated MDGs which include the three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) of sustainable development, and also the dimension of peace and security. The goals should be binding to all countries, measurable, limited in number and easy to communicate. States must be able to meet the goals in accordance with their respective levels of development and capacities.

The Millennium Development Goals united the development efforts of the international community and created a common set of progress measurement tools. The most important development policy process for the coming years involves the UN-led review of old goals and adopting new ones.

Within the UN Finland works for integration of the dimensions of sustainable development, striving for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future. The aim is to establish a framework of goals and targets for all countries whose focus lies on the eradication of poverty within planetary boundaries through sustainable development. Important objectives from Finland’s viewpoint are included in the report of the high-level panel set by the Secretary-General, published in May 2013. The Secretary-General will present his report to the General Assembly in the autumn of 2013.

The goals of the framework should be limited in number, measurable and easily communicable. They should take into account different countries’ level of development and internal situation. Strong local ownership in developing countries is an important factor for Finland when the new goals are being negotiated and implemented.

In the new framework Finland emphasises the central themes of its development policy which also include the spearhead themes in the UN Strategy. Finland advances these objectives especially through the EU, together with the other Nordic countries, by establishing different partnerships, and when necessary on a national basis.
The future target framework should include topics related to human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, democracy and the rule of law as well as other structures in society. It should also reduce inequality, advance gender equality and take into account the needs of vulnerable groups. The framework should also address issues related to peace and security, and conflicts and violence.

Finland’s development perspective also encompasses several other objectives which entail, inter alia, sound management of natural resources, better mobilisation of local resources and increased corporate social responsibility in developing countries. Finland also strives for a better consideration of water and sanitation issues, including their connection with other topics such as energy, food security and health. The future development agenda should also take into account policy coherence for development.

In development funding Finland endorses a broad financing base that makes financial resources increasingly available, alongside Official Development Assistance (ODA). As its point of departure Finland believes that it is important: to mobilise the partner countries’ own resources through, among other things, international trade and investments; to develop national taxation systems and tax revenue collection; and to tackle unregulated capital flight. In support of national funding Finland advances, among other things, public-private partnerships and the introduction of new, innovative financing instruments. Finland continues to present the themes of comprehensive development funding at different UN fora in other ways as well.

Finland emphasises the significance of sustainable and accountable private investments in creating economic and social development and supports the work of the UN system in creating an international investment regime. For this purpose, within the framework of the Helsinki Process, Finland continues the multi-stakeholder dialogue it launched with regard to questions associated with the reform options of the investment regime. Finland actively promotes the strengthening of the role and functions of the UN tax committee.
Supporting the development activities of the UN

Finland actively exerts influence in the governing bodies of the UN agencies it supports as well as in its bilateral relations with the organisations, and together with groups from donor countries such as the Utstein and MOPAN. Positions of trust in organisations, such as the 2013 UNICEF Presidency, provide an exceptionally opportune possibility to promote the effectiveness of organisations. Finland also wields influence in the General Assembly, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and its sub-committees, and in different UN conferences so as to advance our development policy goals.

Finland continues to make a strong investment into the promotion of a human rights based approach, gender equality, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Furthermore, Finland underscores the importance of education as a prerequisite for sustainable development.

A clear division of labour between the UN and other bodies, mutual coordination, complementarity and coherence are necessary, both at the UN Headquarters and at the field level. Finland especially emphasises, among other things, field-level cooperation between UN bodies and the support from the UN Headquarters which this entails.

The bulk of Finland’s core funding to UN bodies is channelled to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF). Other key recipients of general funding include the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). In addition, Finland supports the activities of UN bodies through various projects. The key specialised agencies, programmes and funds supported by Finland are listed in the section ‘Key UN Funds, Programmes and Specialised Agencies that Finland Supports’.
A strategic analysis of Finland’s multilateral development cooperation was completed in the spring of 2013. It systematically evaluated the channels of Finland’s multilateral cooperation. The analysis was the first of its kind and it provided a useful overall picture of Finland’s multilateral cooperation including its apportionment. Likewise, it generated important organisation-specific information with regard to the efficiency and effectiveness of Finland’s cooperation partners. The analysis encompassed 68 multilateral actors. In addition to the internal review of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs the analysis used evaluations generated by other countries and country groups as baseline material.

The analysis shows that Finland’s multilateral development cooperation is split between quite a few organisations. In accordance with the Government’s Development Policy Programme Finland will attempt to reduce fragmentation in development cooperation and concentrate on more clearly prioritised targets. The results of the analysis provide useful background information so as to be able to channel future support to such organisations and financing institutions which can generate the best possible results in the priority areas of Finland’s development policy.

According to the analysis the multilateral organisations which Finland finances are relatively efficient and effective. The effectiveness and efficiency of the key large organisations are, at least, at a satisfactory level. Humanitarian organisations and international development financing institutions fared the best in this comparison. The scores of so-called general development organisations, which include UN development funds and programmes as well as specialised agencies, were more widely dispersed in the listing. The results of the analysis especially provide tools for strengthening organisation-specific effectiveness and for the prioritisation of development cooperation funding.

On the results of the analysis, and other organisation-specific material, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will prepare a special strategy for each multilateral actor that receives development cooperation funding from Finland. The strategy will outline the goals and means of influence related to content, practices, efficiency and effectiveness.
• In order to achieve its development policy goals Finland exerts influence on the executive boards of UN bodies, by means of continual bilateral dialogue and through donors. An example of this is the 2013 Presidency of the UNICEF Executive Board.

• In the development activities of the UN, Finland promotes, inter alia, questions related to human rights based approach, gender equality and the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

• Finland actively participates in preparing the post-2015 development agenda at the national level, in the EU and the UN.

• On the results of the analysis completed in the spring of 2013 the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will prepare a special strategy for each multilateral actor that receives development cooperation funding from Finland. The bulk of Finland’s UN development funding is channelled to the UNFPA, the UNDP, UNICEF and UN Women.

Environment and climate change

In the framework of a wider UN agenda, and on the basis of both (1992, 2012) Rio Conferences on Sustainable Development, Finland intends to respond to the different priority areas and themes of sustainable development, especially as regards the green economy and the Sustainable Development Goals. The work on sustainable development will take into account the results of other meetings and Conventions central to development or the environment.

Environmental governance in the UN system must be further developed and strengthened as part of UN reform. Mutual coordination and coherence between UN bodies and programmes must be advanced on questions related to sustainable development, the environment and climate change. It is important to strengthen multilateral environmental agreements, and to improve coordination and make better use of the synergies between them. Finland supports the work aimed at creating a specialised environmental organisation within the UN.
The UN and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is the central forum of global climate policy. Finland’s key objective, as part of the EU, is to adopt a global greenhouse gas emissions reduction convention under the auspices of the UN, on the basis of the Doha Gateway, among others. Finland actively participates in the negotiations aimed at increasing the effectiveness of international climate policy.

In the UN system a more efficient management of the problems caused by, or associated with, climate change demands the best possible utilisation of the UN Environment Programme’s (UNEP) and other UN actors’ resources as well as achieving synergies with other international organisations. Multilateral cooperation aims, among other things, at securing access to energy for, and supporting climate change adaptation in the poorest countries.

Finland supports the UN forestry process by participating in the activities of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), and promotes the codification of legally binding international forestry norms, especially through the negotiating process for an agreement on European forests. Likewise, the work under the auspices of the UNFCCC on the importance of forests in climate change is also important.

Finland promotes the achievement of goals on water and sanitation as part of human rights. In order to increase water security Finland promotes the ratification and implementation of transboundary water cooperation agreements at different fora.

- Finland comprehensively focuses on the different themes and sectors of sustainable development and especially on the green economy and Sustainable Development Goals as part of the wider UN agenda.

- Finland promotes the codification of legally binding international forestry norms.

- Finland promotes the achievement of goals on water and sanitation as part of human rights.
Developing peacebuilding

In order to promote stability and sustainable development the different forms of assistance must be mutually complementing, starting from crisis prevention, crisis management and humanitarian assistance and culminating in peacebuilding and development cooperation.

The special needs and initial condition of a target area must be taken into account in determining the range of instruments to be implemented. To achieve this Finland supports the activity of the peacebuilding architecture, created as part of the UN reform in 2006, which aims at assisting countries recovering from conflict towards sustainable peace and development and preventing their return to conflict. By supporting post-conflict peacebuilding Finland promotes stability and security, and consolidates the materialisation of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, thereby laying the foundation for sustainable development in support of states transitioning to the post-conflict phase.

The UN peacebuilding architecture comprises the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO), which administers the PBF and the PBC. The main goal of the PBF is to provide support to countries emerging from conflict, and to flexibly and promptly secure resources for such peacebuilding activities which directly contribute to post-conflict stabilisation in the target country, and to strengthening the capacity of society. Its mission statement is based on the premise that during the post-conflict transition phase the PBF will fill the gaps in funding when other financing instruments are unavailable. According to the principles of the Fund it will operate in approximately 20 countries, at maximum, so as to ensure effectiveness and result orientation. Finland funds the PBF and participates in the debate concerning the activities and development of the Fund through, among other things, annual donor conferences and meetings of the group of friends of the PBF. Supporting the Fund also serves as an example of preventing security threats through development policy.
• Finland supports stability and security and strengthens the realisation of democracy, the rule of law and human rights through peacebuilding.

• Finland provides financing to the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and focuses special attention on improving the role of women in issues related to peacebuilding.

Global governance, trade and development, including corporate sustainability and the information society

Pursuant to its Programme the Government strives for the fair distribution of benefits accrued through globalisation and reducing the ills and uncertainty associated with it. In a multipolar world Finland endeavours to actively strengthen and modernise the multilateral system which commits all key actors to common goals and solutions.

Partly because of the difficulties in multilateral cooperation the G20 has become a key cooperative forum for global economic questions. It is Finland’s objective for the G20 to closely interact with UN bodies so as to ensure the representativeness of decision-making in global questions, and to guarantee an opportunity for small states to influence said decision-making.

Issues related to international taxation, and especially associated negative phenomena such as illicit financial flows, tax havens and transfer pricing issues, have become an important topic in international economic policy and the debate related to taxation, as well as in development policy. International taxation questions involve developing countries and industrialised countries alike, and demand systematic action at the national and global level. Country-specific action must take into account the special features of the country and area in question. When it comes to development policy, taxation issues will rise to the forefront on the post-2015 development agenda and as questions related to policy and funding.
Private investments play a crucial role in fostering economic and social progress, in developing and industrialised countries alike. Finland supports the trade of developing countries, including reforming the investment environment, by taking into account the Sustainable Development Goals. This action is steered by Finland’s ‘Aid for Trade’ Action Plan 2012–2015. The objective is to foster green economies that promote employment by developing the private sector, trade and investments.

Finland participates in strengthening the economic base of developing countries also through the activities of UN bodies. These bodies play a prominent role in expanding the trade and production capacities of developing countries, in developing their innovation and trade policy competence, and in enhancing predictability in their economic environment and competitiveness. Multilateral cooperation through the UN is a central channel for Finland in the implementation of its Aid for Trade development cooperation. Finland supports several UN bodies through general funding and by financing their individual programmes. Key partners which Finland supports include the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) working under a joint mandate from the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). The analysis on multilateral aid also provides guidelines for directing the funds related to this theme.

With regard to work on international trade and investments Finland also supports the intensification of cooperation between UN bodies and the WTO, the World Bank, regional development financing institutions and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The activities of UN bodies try to meet the kinds of country and region-level challenges and priorities that demand cross-border, regional or global solutions. Finland focuses its support through UN bodies on developing the business and investment environment, on strengthening a competitive and innovative production capacity and
on the preconditions for foreign trade. The special needs of the poorest developing countries are taken into account in this activity.

The commitments of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS, Geneva 2003 and Tunis 2005) aim at building an inclusive information society, one where all of mankind can enjoy the benefits of ICT technology for the purpose of promoting development, democracy and human rights. The General Assembly is to evaluate the materialisation of the WSIS commitments in 2015.

Finland actively participates in the implementation and follow-up of WSIS commitments in the decision-making bodies and specialised agencies of the UN. Finland supports such solutions which make it possible for developing countries to participate in the global information society. Finland endorses the development of Internet management on the basis of universal cooperation, media freedom, freedom of speech, and the protection of privacy on the Internet. Freedom of the media also presupposes the realisation of other civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights. When the information society develops under the commitments of the WSIS this, for its part, also enhances civil society’s potential.

Finland is the biggest donor of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) which encompasses all relevant stakeholders. Moreover, Finland funds the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The CSTD is responsible for WSIS follow-up in the UN. Finland also supports UNESCO’s WSIS follow-up and the Global Alliance for ICT and Development, a multi-stakeholder forum.

- Finland participates in strengthening the economic base of developing countries also through the activities of UN bodies. Taxation issues are an important element in mobilising national resources and must be taken into account in the post-2015 negotiations.
• Finland supports the trade conditions of developing countries and investment environment reform by providing general funding to several UN bodies and by financing their individual programmes.

• Finland especially emphasises the cooperation between the WTO, the UNCTAD and the OECD in activities related to international investments and sustainable development.

• Finland actively participates in the implementation and follow-up of WSIS commitments in the decision-making bodies and specialised agencies of the UN. Finland supports such solutions which make it possible for developing countries to participate in the global information society.

**PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE RULE OF LAW**

**Human rights**

A robust multilateral system is indispensable for developing and promoting human rights. Due to the universality of human rights the UN, as a global organisation, is irreplaceable. The UN does not only create the universal human rights standards, it also monitors and evaluates their implementation.

Finland underscores the interdependency of human rights, security and development. Finland’s human rights policy is founded on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international law, human rights treaties and other internationally binding human rights documents. Equal rights without distinction of any kind, such as birth, race, gender, age, language, cultural background, religion, political or other opinion, disability, sexual orientation or identity, or other status, is the central point of departure. Democracy and the rule of law must be promoted to guarantee the materialisation of human rights.
Finland emphasises the significance of multilateral cooperation, well-functioning institutions and the international legal order in meeting global challenges. Finland supports the development of international law and strengthening the means of its enforcement in the activities of the UN.

Finland wants to further strengthen the activity of the UN in promoting human rights. In order to boost the cohesion of human rights, security and development in practice, cooperation between the different actors in the UN must be improved and the human rights-based point of departure must be emphasised. Finland’s goal is to mainstream human rights in all UN action. The new, post-2015 development agenda of the world organisation must be based on human rights and the legal obligation of states in order to safeguard the rights.

Finland protects the realisation of human rights and the independence of monitoring mechanisms, and endeavours to guarantee sufficient resources for them.

As the principle of universality of human rights is increasingly under attack, cooperation with like-minded states is ever more important. In order to advance Finland’s priorities it becomes necessary to seek new cooperation partners from among other country groups. Dialogue and cooperation with the emerging states is important.

Finland specifically aims to promote the rights of women, children, sexuality- or gender-based minorities (LGBTI), indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities. Finland also pays particular attention to the prevention of multiple discrimination and the status of minorities. In addition to advancing civil and political rights Finland actively promotes the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights.

Finland supports the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights as regards the responsibility of the state to protect against business-related human rights abuses, the obligation of corporations
to act with due diligence with regard to human rights and their implementation. Finland participates in the international debate on the codification of the responsibilities of transnational corporations and corporate sustainability.

Finland continues to actively pursue its human rights priorities in, especially, the Third Committee of the General Assembly and in the Assembly’s Human Rights Council (HRC), which play important roles as global human rights fora. Whereas Finland mostly wields its influence through the EU, national action with like-minded countries, particularly in questions that divide the Union, is important. Cooperation with the other Nordic countries comes naturally in the form of joint Nordic statements and declarations, among other things.

The Human Rights Council has proved its potential for engaging in human rights situations at any time – even without the consent of the state in question. Finland continues to support such development. The HRC’s universal periodic review (UPR) process must be further improved and strengthened and the mechanism must be utilised in other multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

Finland supports the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and considers that the independence of the High Commissioner should be further strengthened. Finland endorses the goals of the High Commissioner in improving the effectiveness of action and for the universal materialisation of human rights. This also includes closer cooperation with the Security Council as regards the comprehensive observance of human rights in the activities of Council. The OHCHR should receive a much larger share of the regular budget. Finland protects the independence of human rights monitoring bodies and promotes their operating conditions.

Finland considers it to be an important goal that regional human rights treaties, for their part, advance the human rights standards of the UN. Furthermore, it is essential to actively remind everyone of the fact that regional human rights organisations complement the UN system.
• The cross-cutting themes in Finland’s human rights policy are openness and the elimination of discrimination, and increasing inclusion. These goals are taken into account in all activities, and they will be pursued in the UN as well as other international organisations and bilateral cooperation.

• The key projects are based on the cross-cutting themes. They aim at increasing competence, allocating resources and soliciting support for them from others as well. The most effective means will be selected for each spearhead theme.

• The three spearhead themes defined for 2013-2015 are: promoting the participation and the human rights of women and girls; advancing legally binding economic, social and cultural rights, including their implementation; and increasing inclusion.

Rule of law and good governance

Promoting the rule of law is an increasingly important priority area in UN policy which cuts across the activities of many sectors. It should be regarded as a legal and political question as well as a human rights, democracy and development issue. Likewise, the link between rule of law development and migration is strong.

Activity that supports the rule of law in post-crisis cooperation focuses especially on stabilisation by supporting peace processes and by strengthening the judicial system in the target country for the purpose of preventing impunity, among other things. Giving attention to compliance with the rule of law in UN activities, especially in peacekeeping operations and the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, is important. Finland believes that the mechanisms of justice and strengthening the rule of law in the transition phase constitute the central preconditions for sustainable peace and development. Hence, questions related to the rule of law, human rights and democracy are also a natural part of the post-2015 global agenda, and are sectors which Finland wants to promote.
In the UN Finland has strongly brought attention to the rule of law thematic. In the General Assembly’s high-level meeting on the rule of law in September 2012, and at the side event organised by Finland, South Africa and UN Women, Finland expressly emphasised the role of women in improving access to legal protection. Finland’s position is also based on its own experiences as regards the importance of properly functioning rule of law on the development of a democratic society. Finland aims to further support and strengthen the rule of law process of the UN which occurs at international and national levels.

The strengthening of the UN’s internal cooperation and coordination mechanisms must continue. Better internal rule of law coordination within the UN and good cooperation with other actors is seen as an important goal, both at the Headquarters and, especially, at the level of field operations. Concurrently, improving the assessment of results as regards support for the rule of law, and its effectiveness must be given attention.

In the rule of law sector Finland is well equipped to actively promote good governance and anti-corruption. Finland supports the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the further development of its follow-up mechanism.

- Finland supports the United Nations’ rule of law process at the international and national levels.

- Finland pays particular attention to the role of women in improving access to legal protection.

- Finland believes that the rule of law theme must also be included in the post-2015 global agenda.

- Finland supports the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the development of its follow-up mechanism.
INTERNATIONAL LAW

Developing international law and promoting compliance with it are core tasks of the UN, and the UN Charter per se is one of the most prominent references of international law. Commonly adopted international norms are necessary for a functioning global society. Over the course of decades the UN has created a comprehensive network of treaties, comprising over 550 agreements, which are of key importance in the regulation of international relations and the legal development of the member states. The significance of the UN in offering peaceful solutions in disputes is incontestable, and the UN has played a key role in eliminating impunity as regards the most serious crimes of concern to the international community.

Strengthening international law

Finland actively participates in the work that expands the international network of treaties, and wields influence in the General Assembly, in its Sixth Committee dealing with legal matters, and in the development of international law within the UN system. Finland values the support of the General Assembly’s International Law Commission (ILC) in this work.

Finland’s goal is to promote an extensive ratification of international treaties and their effective implementation. In order to secure the substance of multilateral treaties Finland consistently opposes, inter alia, reservations in human rights conventions that defy their purposes and goals.

Finland supports wider acceptance of the powers of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and safeguarding its operating conditions, as well as the strengthening of other peaceful means of resolving disputes.

• Finland supports wider acceptance of the powers of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and strengthening the international network of treaties, inter alia, by opposing caveats that dilute their goals.
Fighting impunity

Fighting impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community is one of Finland’s UN policy goals. States shoulder the primary responsibility for investigating, prosecuting and sentencing crimes. Therefore, attention must be paid to the independence and efficiency of national criminal justice systems and to their development. States are also responsible for the prevention of crime, including the associated effective actions. Finland highlights the central role of UN actors in these efforts. Finland supports the International Criminal Court (ICC) including its Trust Fund, and operates in different groups that support the status of the Court. Finland pays particular attention to the full and appropriate respect for the rights of victims of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as regards trials by the Court. Notwithstanding the independence of the ICC, the relationship between the Court and the UN should be strengthened. The Security Council should act in the most consistent manner in transferring cases to the Court, and the monitoring role of the Security Council as regards said cases should be increased. Finland also supports the appropriate completion of the cases of ad hoc war crime tribunals established by the UN and the so-called hybrid tribunals, including their residual tasks.

- Finland supports actions that aim at preventing impunity and improving the status of victims.

- As a member of the Bureau of the ASP (Assembly of States Parties of the International Criminal Court) until late autumn of 2014, and as a member of ‘Friends of the ICC’, Finland supports the International Criminal Court.

- Finland emphasises the role of the Security Council in monitoring the cases it has transferred to the ICC, and the need to increase its monitoring activities.
• Finland also more generally highlights the role of the Security Council in the elimination of impunity with regard to topics such as Children and Armed Conflict and the 1325 theme.

Humanitarian Assistance

Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 46/182 the UN has the leading role in coordinating humanitarian assistance. In order to effectively deliver humanitarian aid to those who need it, the UN-led international humanitarian assistance system must be suitably prepared and well-coordinated. Ever since 2005 the humanitarian assistance reform process has improved aid effectiveness. The effectiveness of aid is also one of the priorities of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and the UN is presently preparing a humanitarian assistance summit for 2015. In the future more attention must be paid to good management, the quality of partnerships, the assessment of effectiveness and accountability, and promoting the smooth cooperation of the entire UN system in disasters. It is important that the international assistance system be seen as impartial and the humanitarian principles universal. This is also a prerequisite for expanding the donor base. At present, only 60 per cent of the requests for annual emergency aid from the UN are covered.

Finland provides human rights-based and needs-based humanitarian assistance. The bulk of assistance is allocated to the poorest countries and focuses on aiding the most vulnerable people. The needs of the people receiving assistance are seen as rights which the international community is duty-bound to meet. The recipients should be heard in the process of planning and making decisions.

Finland does not have any bilateral humanitarian assistance projects. Rather, Finland channels the bulk of its assistance in a centralised manner through the UN system. In accordance with the principles of good humanitarian donorship Finland highlights the importance of multilateral cooperation and the primacy of the UN system as a humanitarian actor. Humanitarian assistance should be humane, fair,
impartial and independent. Finland actively endorses a comprehensive UN reform in humanitarian assistance to make it more effective. Finland’s goal is to guarantee the humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence of humanitarian assistance even when military and civil defence resources are being used in support of humanitarian missions.

In its UN policy Finland promotes the strengthening of humanitarian assistance by proactively influencing the boards of UN bodies. Key channels of influence comprise direct contacts with different secretariats, other donor countries and the partners with whom Finland engages in dialogue about respecting the humanitarian principles and ensuring that the aid reaches its target.

In the humanitarian assistance sector Finland also provides correctly-timed funds in advance by signing multi-year financing contracts with UN bodies on general funding, and expedites the decision-making process regarding the provision of humanitarian aid in situations demanding humanitarian assistance. In humanitarian assistance as well, the multilateral assistance analysis steers the focusing of funding.

• Finland is a responsible, correctly-timed and predictable donor of UN humanitarian assistance.

• In accordance with the principles of good humanitarian donorship Finland highlights the importance of multilateral cooperation, and the primacy of the UN system as a humanitarian actor.

• Finland promotes the strengthening of humanitarian assistance by proactively influencing the boards of UN bodies. Most of the influencing is done at organisations and funds to which Finland mostly provides humanitarian assistance funding: the UNHCR, the WFP, UNICEF, the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the WHO, the UNRWA, the OCHA and the Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) for Somalia administered by the UNDP. Investments in other organisations will only be made as an exception, in accordance with the principles of humanitarian assistance, on the basis of need.
Key channels of influence comprise direct contacts with different secretariats, other donor countries and Finland’s partner countries.

**Key UN Funds, Programmes and Specialised Agencies supported by Finland**

The following is a list of the key UN funds, programmes and specialised agencies that Finland supports. The recipients of the largest funding are mentioned first, followed by programmes and specialised agencies, and humanitarian aid organisations. The focus of Finland’s future funding is also affected by the results of the multilateral assistance evaluation, and the guidelines defined on said results as regards future funding, and the definitions of Finland’s cooperation goals through special strategies.

**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

Finland is one of the biggest providers of general funding to UNFPA, and an internationally important actor in the sector of sexual and reproductive health and rights. The UNFPA supports the member states’ governments in questions related to population and development. It aims at providing universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, promoting reproductive health rights, and reducing maternal mortality within the framework of the ICPD\(^5\) Programme of Action (PoA) and internationally adopted development goals.

The promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights are included in the core mandate of the UNFPA. In supporting the achievements of the Millenium Development Goals, the UNFPA is engaged, in particular, with sexual and reproductive health and rights goals that have suffered from slow progress, as well as the promotion of gender equality and empowering women. These are key goals for Finland. The UNFPA also provides humanitarian assistance.

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\(^5\) International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, 1994
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Finland supports the activities of the UNDP through significant core and project funding, and by sponsoring Finnish Junior Professional Officers and UN volunteers within the agency. In addition, Finland provides funding to the Humanitarian Country Team in Somalia. The UNDP supports the strengthening of developing countries’ capacities in planning, political coordination and implementation at country level. Also, it chairs the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and coordinates, mostly at the country level, the entire UN system as part of UN development sector reform which has been a priority for Finland. When it comes to promoting democracy, good governance and human rights the UNDP is one of Finland’s most important partners in the UN system. The UNDP supports the strengthening of democracy through the development of legislation and governance. In the human rights sector the UNDP has supported its partner countries in improving and strengthening action plans and institutions. The UNDP’s work is important in crisis prevention and recovery, and it also provides humanitarian assistance. Finland has supported the cooperation between the UNDP and the secretariat of the UN Department of Political Affairs in the Inter-Agency Framework Team for Preventive Action. In humanitarian assistance the agency is responsible for the coordination of the Cluster Working Group on Early Recovery. In addition, it administers country-level general funding for humanitarian assistance, together with the OCHA.

United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD)

The UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) operates under the UNDP. Finland allocates general funding for the purpose of promoting the human rights of persons with disabilities. The goal of the UNPRPD is to develop the local and national actors’ capabilities in implementing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The UNPRPD is a partnership established by six agencies (the UNDP, UNICEF, the ILO, the WHO, the
UNDESA and the OHCHR) and administered by the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office of the UNDP, which primarily funds the country teams of participating UN agencies and provides expert assistance with regard to the rights of disabled persons. The UNPRPD aims to mainstream the human rights of persons with disabilities as part of all UN country-level activities, in addition to which it funds country programmes in promoting employment opportunities for disabled persons, educating disabled children and youth and in improving the vocational skills of disabled persons, among other things.

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

Finland is a long-time supporter of UNICEF. Through UNICEF it channels a sizeable assessed contribution annually. In addition, Finland supports UNICEF with project funding on education, water and sanitation, and sponsors Finnish Junior Professional Officers and UN volunteers within the agency. The mission of UNICEF is based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It aims at strengthening the capacities of partner countries in promoting the rights of children globally by implementing a human rights-based approach. The agency focuses on human development and, particularly child health, the education and development of child protection and social protection systems. By investing in children and, especially in the education of girls it is possible to reduce poverty and support development. UNICEF is also an important actor in humanitarian assistance. It has wide-ranging responsibilities for coordination in humanitarian crises. UNICEF leads the Nutrition and WASH (water, sanitation, and hygiene) Clusters, it has co-leadership of the Education Cluster and the responsibility for child protection within the Global Protection Cluster led by the UNHCR.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and for the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

Finland actively promotes gender equality issues in the UN and in its member states, inter alia, by supporting the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). In recent years
Finland has significantly increased its funding for UN Women and is one of its biggest core funders at present. In addition to the core funding Finland supports various projects of UN Women and sponsors Finnish Junior Professional Officers and UN Volunteers within the agency. UN Women promotes gender equality, and advances the rights and status of women and girls within the UN system as well as at the country level. It works for the participation and leadership of women, the prevention of violence against women, advancing the role of women in conflict resolution, the economic empowerment of women and the inclusion of gender equality-related issues in member states’ national decision-making, planning and budgeting. UN Women is also responsible for the implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP).

**United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)**

Finland is one of the biggest donors of UNAIDS. The central themes for Finland in the work of UNAIDS are advancing human rights and improving the standing of women, especially, children and marginalised groups, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and providing sexual education for youth. UNAIDS works for improving the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, and supporting the implementation of commitments made in the General Assembly Special Sessions on HIV/AIDS. In accordance with a pre-agreed division of responsibilities UNAIDS coordinates the work of eleven Co-sponsoring Organisations that support the programme (the UNHCR, UNICEF, the WFP, the UNDP, the UNFPA, UN Women, the UNODC, the ILO, UNESCO, the WHO and the World Bank). UNAIDS has put HIV/AIDS on the global agenda and helped in making politicians understand that HIV/AIDS is not only a health issue but, rather, a factor that also affects social progress and economic growth as well as human rights and security.
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

UNEP is the leading actor in environmental issues at the UN level, and its role is increasing along with the desire to intensify international cooperation in questions related to sustainable development. UNEP plays an important role in launching multilateral environmental negotiations aimed at international climate conventions and in supporting the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements. In addition, UNEP generates scientific information on the environment to support political decision-making.

Finland has consistently tried to strengthen the mandate, status and effective management of UNEP. The long-term goal is to transform UNEP into a UN specialised agency which would also strengthen its financial base. Thus far UNEP’s financing base is formed of voluntary contributions with Finland being one of UNEP’s most important donors, especially as regards core funding. Within UNEP Finland has focused on supporting the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in developing countries, strengthening international environmental governance as part of UN-level efforts as well as questions related to the environment and security. When it comes to issues related to UNEP the leading authority in Finland is the Ministry of Environment. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) is responsible for the core funding of UNEP, and for other voluntary funding.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT)

The focus areas of UN-HABITAT are well-designed and managed, sustainable and efficient cities and communities, those with sufficient urban infrastructure and whose inhabitants have access to employment, land use and basic services such as housing, water and sanitation, energy and mobility. UN-HABITAT supports the commitment and know-how of countries and local authorities in creating and implementing a sound basic urban infrastructure policy.
Finland is an important, long-time supporter of UN-HABITAT. Finland’s funding is directed to UN-HABITAT’s core budget in its entirety (rather than individual projects), which UN-HABITAT has greatly appreciated.

World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO is Finland’s most important partner in the development of global health policy. In Finland the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is responsible for implementing WHO-related policy. In addition to its assessed contribution Finland supports the WHO through development cooperation funds with core and earmarked funding, and by sponsoring Finnish Junior Professional Officers and UN Volunteers within the agency. The WHO is a normative specialised agency of the UN system: it has leadership of global health policy, acts as an expert organisation, and builds a long-term health policy. It sets international standards and norms for health care and advances their implementation. The WHO has an important role in focusing the direction of research and in the application of research results. It also monitors the global health situation and generates health statistics. The WHO supports developing countries in establishing health care systems and attempts to improve access to medicines therein. As regards humanitarian assistance, the WHO is responsible for coordinating the Global Health Cluster.

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is the lead ministry responsible for Finnish cooperation with and for Finland’s assessed contribution to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The MFA is responsible for the development and humanitarian funding allocated to the FAO. The FAO has been an important partner for Finland in promoting sustainable management of natural resources and climate change adaptation and mitigation in developing countries. Finland has supported the FAO’s thematic projects related to sustainable forestry, climate-smart agriculture and land registration. Furthermore, Finland has supported the agency’s country programmes in Kyrgyzstan, the
Balkans, Zambia and Tanzania, among others. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is a specialised agency of the UN which focuses on agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The predominant position of agriculture in eliminating hunger and poverty gives the FAO an important role in international development policy. In addition the FAO has co-leadership of the WFP’s Global Food Security Cluster, based in Rome. The cluster coordinates the food response during humanitarian crises, addressing issues of food availability, access and utilisation.

**International Labour Organization (ILO)**

The Ministry of Employment and the Economy is responsible for Finland’s assessed contribution to the ILO. In addition, support has been provided by using development cooperation and neighbouring area cooperation funds to, inter alia, eliminate child labour, improve the status of persons with disabilities in the labour market, improve the employment of women, and to create jobs in a sustainable green economy. The main goals of the ILO include the reduction of poverty, and the promotion of social justice, gender equality and employment. A special feature of the agency is its tripartite administrative structure which includes the representatives of governments, workers and employers. The ILO works for the development of international labour standards, legal instruments for labour and the labour market system. Moreover, it promotes the freedom of speech and assembly. Strengthening gender equality, the status of women and children and minorities is a central cross-cutting theme. In recent years decent work has been one of the ILO’s priorities and the ILO has developed regional and country programmes to support promotion of decent work especially in developing countries.

**United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**

Education and training, science and research, culture and an independent and accountable media, all within the purview of UNESCO, are pivotal
in conflict prevention and counter-terrorism. Finland values UNESCO’s activities in the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and in drafting the post-2015 development agenda.

Through UNESCO Finland has managed to improve and widen its international cultural relations. The agency has also provided new stimuli to Finnish education, science and culture policy. Intercultural education, lifelong learning, protecting cultural heritage, sustainable development, researching the earth’s water problems, and peace and conflict studies are examples of UNESCO’s activities which are important to Finland.

Finland’s objectives in UNESCO’s activities focus on questions in which the agency can generate better added value than other international actors. In Finland’s view the most important areas are education, communications and the ICT sector. Promoting the status of women and girls, especially through education is a special priority area for Finland. Finland underscores UNESCO’s role in protecting human rights and, particularly, freedom of speech and the press. Finland supports UNESCO’s freedom of speech projects in North Africa and the Middle East with substantial funding.

The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC), in close cooperation with the MFA, is responsible for the implementation of Finland’s UNESCO policy. Whereas the MEC is responsible for Finland’s assessed contribution to UNESCO, the MFA sees to the voluntary funding given to the agency. There is an attempt to improve the effectiveness of the latter by concentrating the funding.

**International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

The IAEA is an independent organisation ‘in the United Nations family’ whose mission is to promote the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and to ensure that fissile materials under its supervision or control not be transferred to military or other purposes, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The work of the IAEA is built on three pillars: 1. Nuclear
safety and counter-nuclear terrorism, 2. Nuclear science and technology, and 3. Nuclear verification. In addition to its annual contribution Finland supports the IAEA’s Technical Cooperation Fund and Nuclear Security Fund.

**United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), part of the UN Secretariat and reporting to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), acts as a treaty body that manages and supervises the treaties in this sector. In addition, the UNODC manages the development within the UN, such as the United Nations International Drug Control Programme. In the meetings of commissions and their sub-groups Finland is represented by sectoral ministries, supported by the Embassy of Finland in Vienna. Finland provides annual assessed contribution to the drug control programme. In addition, Finland supports the UNODC’s country-level development programme in Afghanistan.

**UNU World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU-WIDER)**

Finland supports the UNU-WIDER institute situated in Helsinki through core funding and project support. The UNU-WIDER is one of the 12 research institutions of the United Nations University. The main focus of the institute is to carry out research seeking to identify solutions to global development problems and analyse the global economy. The institute aims at encouraging research, further education and the dissemination of information in the field, and promoting the development of forms of international economic cooperation. WIDER attempts to support the achievement of the MDGs, in particular through strengthening the research and analysis capacities of developing countries. The institute’s research programme for 2012-2014 encompasses the ‘triple crises’ (finance, food, and climate change).
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNHCR is the refugee agency of the UN, mandated to implement humanitarian assistance and the protection of refugees. Pursuant to the Geneva Conventions⁶, a refugee is someone who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality…”. In addition, the UNHCR is responsible for assisting Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). As the share of the latter group is continually on the rise, the original tasks of the UNHCR have expanded. However, IDPs are not included in the original mandate of the UNHCR. Moreover, the tasks of the UNHCR also cover the smaller group of stateless people. The UNHCR plays a central role in the UN humanitarian assistance system, it is responsible for refugee crises and the Global Protection Cluster. The agency’s forte is its well-functioning field organisation. The UNHCR is the agency that receives the most humanitarian aid contributions from Finland. At the MFA the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance cooperates on UNHCR-related activities with the Unit for Human Rights Policy, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy.

World Food Programme (WFP)

The World Food Programme (WFP) is an operational programme of the UN which, owing to its dual mandate, uses food assistance for humanitarian purposes and for the promotion of economic and social development. Nonetheless, the main stress lies on humanitarian aid, which will continue throughout the following strategic plan period of 2014-2017. The WFP is the lead agency of the UN humanitarian assistance Logistics Cluster and the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster. In addition, it has co-leadership of the Food Security Cluster with the FAO. The WFP belongs to the UN category ‘Funds and Programmes’, and it reports to the ECOSOC and the FAO Council. The WFP is one of

⁶ United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
Finland’s largest humanitarian assistance channels. At the MFA the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance is responsible for issues related to the WFP.

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

Pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 46/182 the UN has the leading role in coordinating humanitarian assistance. The OCHA also leads the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in developing the humanitarian assistance system. The OCHA is part of the UN Secretariat which, in addition to the headquarters in New York and Geneva, operates an extensive network of regional and field offices. The OCHA’s strategic framework for 2010-2013 defines three goals: 1. A more enabling environment for humanitarian action, 2. A more effective humanitarian coordination system, and 3. To strengthen OCHA management and administration.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)

The UNRWA is a UN agency administering to Palestinian refugees. Its mandate covers the Palestinians living in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. These days there are approximately 4.8 million Palestinian refugees under the mandate of the UNRWA. Population growth has been rapid because in 1950 the corresponding figure was below one million. The situation of Palestinian refugees varies greatly from country to country in the area, as do the challenges related to their status and the activities of the UNRWA. Over the course of decades the role of the UNRWA has changed from its original purpose. Whereas the UNRWA was founded for the purpose of humanitarian assistance, it later became an actor in development cooperation and a state-like provider of basic services to the Palestinians. Education and health care are the UNRWA’s biggest sectors, and the agency is an important employer of the Palestinians (over 30 000 employees). The agency maintains 58 refugee camps inhabited by approximately 1.4 million people in need of aid. In Finland the MFA’s Unit for Humanitarian Assistance is responsible for coordinating the activities of the UNRWA, together with the Unit for the Middle East and North Africa.
United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is responsible for humanitarian mine action, and its scope is wide-ranging. The UNMAS operates under the authority of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). The primary function of the UNMAS is to coordinate mine action and to disburse funds to the cooperating organisations. The economic crisis has impacted the financial situation of the UNMAS because donor countries have cut their general funding. The MFA's Unit for Humanitarian Assistance is responsible for coordinating the activities of the UNMAS, together with the Unit for Arms Control at the Political Department of the MFA.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR)

The UNISDR secretariat was founded in 1999 to coordinate the work of the UN system in the prevention of disaster risks. The function of the secretariat is to increase awareness about natural disasters and coordinate the implementation of the so-called Hyogo Framework for Action, including associated reporting. Even though the UNISDR is fundamentally a development actor, the Unit for Humanitarian Assistance has so far had the responsibility of coordinating the activities concerning it. At the national level the Ministry of the Interior leads and coordinates the work of the Hyogo network, including periodic reporting to the UN.

UN reform

Strengthening the capacity of the world organisation is a cross-cutting goal in Finland’s UN policy. Finland considers that the founding of the Human Rights Council, UN Women and the Peacebuilding Commission, and the reforms made in humanitarian assistance serve as good examples of successful reform.
Finland continues to promote the reforms adopted in the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. When it comes to the composition of the Security Council Finland supports increasing the number of permanent and non-permanent members, except without an extension of the right of veto. Finland has expressly emphasised the need for better representation of African states in the Council. In Security Council reform Finland considers it important to improve practices, provide opportunities to hear the opinion of experts, effectively employ the early-warning system, and increase transparency. Finland, for its part, aims to improve the activities of the General Assembly by, among other things, organising a planning session for the President of the General Assembly and the chairs of its committees. Finland also supports streamlining the structures of the Economic and Social Council. Sufficient resources and operating conditions must be safeguarded for the human rights monitoring framework, while respecting its independence. Finland supports better effectiveness and accountability in reforming the Secretariat as well as increasing the independent capacity of the Secretary-General.

Guaranteeing a stable financial situation for the UN through improvements in budgetary discipline and the Secretariat’s cost-efficiency is one of Finland’s goals. Furthermore, Finland considers it important to strengthen the financing base of the UN, including increasing the share of assessed contributions of the emerging economies. Finland strives to guarantee sufficient resources to the UN, especially with regard to the activities that belong to Finland’s priority areas. Also, Finland influences the General Assembly’s Fifth Committee which handles budgetary and administrative affairs, so as to achieve these goals. In practice, achieving the results requires allocating resources from the programme budget, peacekeeping budget and the budget for international tribunals.

Coordinated action and sufficiently robust monitoring mechanisms are expected of the UN so as to support and promote sustainable development by, for example, reforming the environmental governance of the UN. Finland strives towards the strengthening of the existing structures in international environmental governance. Hence, it is
elemental to improve and strengthen the activities of UNEP on the basis of the results of the Rio+20 conferences.

Finland supports strengthening the effectiveness and coherence of the operational agencies of the UN, at the Headquarters and field level alike. The ‘One UN’ concept has aimed at improving cooperation at country level in four areas: one programme, one budget/one fund, one leader, and one office. Further development in the division of labour and cooperation within the development sector must also continue at the Headquarters level, such as in reforming the ECOSOC.

Finland holds the opinion that the UN plays a central role in coordinating the management of globalisation. The cooperative arrangements of the UN in relation to the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation need to be improved so as to increase efficiency and effectiveness, and to avoid unnecessary duplication. The work of the Chief Executives’ Board for Coordination (CEB), led by the Secretary-General, supports this goal.

Finland endorses improvements in cooperation between the UN and civil society, and the private sector. The opportunities for civil society and the private sector to participate in and present their views in UN bodies, at summit meetings and in their follow-up mechanisms must be increased.

- Strengthening the effectiveness and capacity of the UN system is a cross-cutting goal in Finland’s UN policy.

- The coordinating role of the UN must be safeguarded in the development of global governance.

- Finland endorses a key role for the UN in promoting sustainable development, and strengthening the international environmental governance.
• Sufficient resources for the UN must be guaranteed by improving the discipline according to which the member states disburse their assessments and through the Secretariat’s cost-efficiency.

• Finland supports the increase of interaction between the UN and civil society, and the private sector.

CHANNELS OF INFLUENCE AND COOPERATION PARTNERS

INCREASING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FINLAND’S UN POLICY

Finland’s goals at the multilateral, bilateral and EU levels support and complement each other. By actively monitoring the work and UN policies of UN actors in countries that are of prime importance to Finland’s own UN policy it is possible to improve our prospects of wielding influence at the country level and on the boards of UN bodies, among others.

From the standpoint of the effectiveness of Finland’s UN policy the following channels are elemental:

Influencing the UN through the EU

The EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy has significantly developed during the past decade: this has impacted the status of the EU in the UN and, consequently, Finland’s UN policy as well. The EU is Finland’s most important reference group and channel in UN policy and Finland actively endeavours to strengthen the role and status of the EU within the UN. It is important that Finland actively present its views in EU decision-making, and support the EU’s joint action when EU Member States formulate their common foreign relations policy in Brussels, New York, other UN cities, as well as when preparing for UN meetings and follow-up processes. Finland regards that the role of the
Council working group for the United Nations (CONUN) as a planning and coordinating body should be strengthened.

The Lisbon Treaty, which the EU adopted on 13 December 2007, led to the creation of the European External Action Service and, consequently, a higher profile for the EU in international bodies. Finland supports the strengthening of the role, profile, capacity and practices of the EU in the UN. However, the EU’s action, especially in the UN, has not developed quite the way in which Finland hoped it would. This is one of the reasons why it must be remembered that EU cooperation does not eliminate the need for a national UN policy, or Nordic cooperation.

**Influencing the UN through the Nordic Group**

The Nordic countries are an important reference group for Finland in the UN, and Nordic cooperation is an integral element of Finland’s UN policy. Traditional cooperation in UN candidacies and reforms has laid the foundation for Nordic cooperation. Nordic representation complements EU influencing. Joint Nordic statements in the Security Council and resolutions in the General Assembly’s Third Committee serve as good examples of this.

Finland considers that an open debate on the importance and means of Nordic cooperation is a positive phenomenon through which the Nordic countries can successfully pursue their issues of importance and values within the UN system.

Annual meetings of the heads of UN affairs at Nordic and Baltic foreign ministries are an established tradition in Nordic-Baltic cooperation. The same applies to the annual Nordic consultations with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

In addition to active Nordic cooperation Finland also wields influence on international development questions through the so-called Nordic+ Group (Nordic countries, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Ireland) as regards aid effectiveness, coordination, harmonisation,
results and coherence of development assistance. Nordic+ cooperation can markedly affect the work of the UN and its agencies, funds and programmes at the country level. At the same time this serves as a good example of how regional cooperation and multilateral efforts support and complement each other.

Elected offices in UN Bodies

Elected offices bring visibility to Finland and provide better-than-normal and more concrete options for participation and influence in the handling of various issues in different bodies. Finland intends to continue pursuing elected offices in different bodies of the UN. This also applies to action when representing the group of western nations in different bureaux.

Influencing the boards of Programmes, Funds and Specialised Agencies

Finland actively participates in the work of the executive boards of the UN development programmes and funds which it supports in accordance with the agreed rotation, and as a member or observer. The special focus is on those programmes and funds which receive considerable funding from Finland. On the basis of the strategic analysis of Finland’s multilateral development cooperation, and the Government’s Development Policy Programme, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs will draft special strategies for all important programmes and funds.

Finland consistently lobbies the decision-making of specialised agencies in the General Assembly and, as per their rotation arrangements, on their executive boards. Specialised agencies play a central role in developing normative work, and they also provide technical expertise to the member nations.

In January 2013 Finland was elected President of the Executive Board of UNICEF, and is presently a candidate for membership in the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for the 2013-2017 period.
Recruiting Finns to UN positions

Through their competence Finns have made an important contribution to the activities of the UN. Sufficiently qualitative, substantive and wide representation in the UN Secretariat, specialised agencies and operational agencies as well as field activities is also important from the standpoint of promoting Finland’s UN objectives. In addition to the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) programme Finland supports the placement of Finnish candidates in mid-level and executive positions, at both the UN Headquarters and field level alike. The UN Secretariat has particularly requested that female candidates apply for different mid-level and executive positions. Finland’s foreign missions play a central role in identifying the posted UN positions and actively supporting the election of Finnish candidates. At home, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs increasingly takes charge in monitoring recruitment issues done by different bodies concerned with UN affairs.

Domestic cooperation

Cooperation between the authorities

While the Foreign Service is responsible for UN policy, many other ministries and authorities also manage UN-related matters, pursuant to the Government Act (175/2003).

Questions related to comprehensive security, such as the eradication of poverty, health and sustainable development, have gained prominence in recent years. This, for its part, has increased the need for intersectoral political steering and cooperation. Other topics that require an intersectoral approach include questions related to the status of women and social development, population and narcotics issues, human trafficking and violence as well as health issues and the impact of migrations.
From the standpoint of the effectiveness of Finland’s UN policy, cooperation and interaction between the Foreign Service and the other authorities must be close and constructive. This cooperation and the division of duties must be further improved. Properly working relations between different actors is a prerequisite for efficient cooperation. This does not necessarily mean the establishment of any new structures. Rather, it is about identifying new and novel practices.

Cooperation with Parliament

Regular dialogue with Parliament on UN matters will continue. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs closely cooperates with the Foreign Affairs Committee. As part of this cooperation the Committee pays annual visits to the UN Headquarters. The dialogue regarding the UN and cooperation on UN-related matters also continue with Parliament’s other bodies and groups.

Cooperation with civil society

Civil society’s interest in UN-related topics is a valuable and significant asset to Finland. The key partners of the MFA, alongside the UN Association of Finland are Finland’s UNICEF, UN Women, the Finnish League for Human Rights, Amnesty International Finland, the Family Federation of Finland, the Finnish Refugee Council. Crisis Management Initiative (CMI), Finn Church Aid (FCA) and certain other NGOs have actively participated in the development of mediation, among other things. The MFA also financially supports them and encourages Finnish NGOs to closely cooperate with UN bodies that are relevant from their standpoint.

The MFA, together with the UN Association of Finland, has organised regular meetings with NGOs that monitor UN-related matters so as to be able to take their positions into account in choosing the priority areas in Finland’s UN policy, and so that the NGOs receive information about the authorities’ UN-related activities. The participation of NGOs in UN meetings will be promoted together with the UN Association of
Finland. The decades-long practice of a youth delegate participating in the meeting of the General Assembly will be continued and improved. Finland also supports the strengthening of civil society’s role in the activities of the UN at the international level. This work applies equally to the NGOs right to actively participate in different UN meetings and the possibilities for them to influence the draft agendas and follow-up of the meetings.

The trip to the General Assembly for the representatives of political parties (so-called polegates) is organised every autumn. The MFA closely cooperates with Finnish universities and research institutes on different UN-related topics. Universities and research institutes have participated in drafting this Strategy in connection with seminars, among other things.

The MFA has organised public meetings on topical foreign and security policy issues, such as the UN, in various parts of Finland. This has also been the case with the drafting of this Strategy.

**Implementing the UN Strategy**

The implementation of this Strategy will be monitored within the framework of the Foreign Service’s normal planning, follow-up and assessment systems, the most important of which are the operating and financial plans and annual plans. The goals of the Strategy also steer the preparation of the annual General Assembly prioritisation, at which time, according to the established practice, civil society will be heard. Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee will be informed of the annual priority areas and of their realisation.
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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>AOC</td>
<td>Alliance of Civilizations</td>
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<td>ATT</td>
<td>Arms Trade Treaty</td>
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<td>CEB</td>
<td>Chief Executives’ Board for Coordination</td>
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<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<td>CONUN</td>
<td>European Union Working Group for the United Nations</td>
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<td>CSTD</td>
<td>Commission on Science and Technology for Development</td>
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<td>DPA</td>
<td>Department of Political Affairs</td>
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<td>DPKO</td>
<td>Department of Peacekeeping Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOSOC</td>
<td>Economic and Social Council</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<td>IAEA</td>
<td>International Atomic Energy Agency</td>
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<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<td>ICC</td>
<td>International Criminal Court</td>
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<td>ICJ</td>
<td>International Court of Justice</td>
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<td>ILC</td>
<td>International Law Commission</td>
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<td>ICPD</td>
<td>International Conference on Population and Development</td>
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<td>Internally Displaced Persons</td>
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<td>IGF</td>
<td>Internet Governance Forum</td>
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<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>ITC</td>
<td>International Trade Centre</td>
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JPO, Junior Professional Officer
MDG, Millennium Development Goals
MSU, Mediation Support Unit
NPT, Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
OCHA, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA, Official Development Aid
OECD, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PBC, Peacebuilding Commission
PBF, Peacebuilding Fund
PBSO, Peacebuilding Support Office
R2P, RtoP, Responsibility to Protect
SDG, Sustainable Development Goals
SPM, Special Political Mission
SSR, Security Sector Reform
UN Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and for the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS, United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDG, United Nations Development Group
UNDP, United Nations Development Programme
UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund
UN-Habitat, United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF, United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIDO, United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNISDR, United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNMAS, United Nations Mine Action Service
UNODC, United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime
UPR, Universal Periodic Review
UNPRPD, United Nations Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNRWA, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
UN-SWAP, United Nations System-Wide Action Plan
UNU, United Nations University
WFP, World Food Program
WHO, World Health Organisation
WSIS, World Summit on the Information Society
WTO, World Trade Organisation