



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

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

Rome, 26 November 2024

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

My optimism is based on what we have accomplished together.

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

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

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

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

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

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

IDLO has been present in Moldova since 2018.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Empowering Justice Seekers**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IDLO is increasingly implementing subregional approaches to address transnational issues.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We are currently finalizing assessments for Mali and Burkina Faso.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Inclusive economic development**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Climate Justice**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Health**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Organizational enablers**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

## **Investing in people**

IDLO's people are our most valuable asset.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Systems and Processes**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Legal status**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Strengthening Partnerships**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **Management Updates**

Turning to management updates,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Looking Ahead**

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

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

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

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

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

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