



**Minister of Social Security Sanni Grahn-Laasonen**  
**28.5.2024, 77th World Health Assembly: Agenda item 3, general discussion**  
**Finland's National Statement**

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Honorable President,  
Director General,  
Delegates,

Finland aligns itself with the statement delivered by Belgium on behalf of the EU.

Finland highly appreciates the hard work and dedication of WHO in delivering health for all. The role of WHO as a leader and convener in global health is more important than ever. However, we are concerned about the increasing geopolitical tensions that contest the international health community's ability to collaborate and to find consensus even on technical health issues.

The role of WHO as the lead in the UN humanitarian health response has become critical. Women often bear the heaviest burden in crisis both as caregivers and as health care workers. It is important to recognize women's role in strengthening the resilience and social cohesion of societies. The increasing attacks on health infrastructure and personnel, the use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war and the disrespect for international humanitarian law are unacceptable.

Director General,

Finland appreciates the comprehensiveness and clear strategic focus of the 14th General Programme of Work to promote, provide and protect health for all. We encourage WHO to continue to strengthen gender mainstreaming and sexual and reproductive health and rights. In addition, the meaningful engagement of persons living in vulnerable situations will ensure that no-one is left behind.

The latest MOPAN assessment report states that ‘The COVID-19 pandemic helped highlight and reinforce WHO’s important normative role in providing the world with authoritative information, guidance and standards to meet global health challenges.’ While the focus of WHO has understandably shifted to delivering health at the country level, we strongly believe in WHO’s mission to deliver also in its unique global normative role.

Thank you.