

**Statement by Dr. Erkki Tuomioja, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland  
Inaugural meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development  
24 September 2013**

**Leaders Dialogue: Global partnerships for development  
to create jobs and improve sustainable lifestyles**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Speaking on behalf of my country at the Rio +20' conference I stressed that with climate change, "the accelerating loss of biodiversity and current other changes we may, at best, have only a few decades time to reach ecologically, socially and economically sustainable development. No-one can be certain that we can do this, or even if it is possible at all. We need a strong sense of urgency to be able to correctly address our agenda."

I would like to think that this High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will reflect the needed sense of urgency better than in Rio and that with this accomplishment, the international community will show the needed political will to continuously address the challenge – and opportunity - of sustainable development at the highest possible level.

I expect this Forum to truly advance integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development while recognizing its fundamental link with poverty eradication. Furthermore, governance, human rights, as well as peace and security should be seen as prerequisites for achieving a dignified life for all. An effective review mechanism will be one of the key factors measuring the success of the Forum.

An integrated view into sustainable development calls for an across-the-board look at its financing, as well. In this respect, I am happy that Finland, together with Nigeria, is co-chairing the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. The Committee will look into financing needs, mobilization of resources as well as institutional arrangements to propose effective solutions to facilitate funding for sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To achieve sustainable development it will have to come alive at the level of individuals – through work and everyday living. Green economy is about green growth. The Government of Finland has launched several green economy related political strategies and programmes on sustainable consumption and production, bio-economy and clean technology, to name just a few.

On the global level, our development policies aim at promoting an inclusive green economy which will strengthen human well-being, social equality and social sustainability. The green economy we want to promote is low-carbon, resource-efficient, socially inclusive and creates responsible entrepreneurial activity and decent work and well-being for all. Finland will support, for example, the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) initiative of several UN organizations which supports 30 countries over the next seven years in building national green economy strategies.

We have managed to increase the level of human development in many parts of the world. At the same time our material consumption has multiplied and is reaching its ecological limits.

This is why we urgently need to change our lifestyles – to accomplish high human development within the carrying capacity of nature. Here – in changing our unsustainable patterns - the industrialized countries and economies with high material consumption should take the lead.

In this respect, I would like to underline the importance of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes that was adopted at the Rio+20 Summit aiming at accelerating this shift in all countries. It is a true global partnership in capacity building and facilitating access to financial and technological solutions for developing countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All this boils down to concrete everyday choices in terms of housing, food and transport, for example, and how these favourable, smart changes in consumption patterns could improve the quality of life and create new jobs and business opportunities. Finally, it is not only about economics; lifestyles embrace broader concepts like values, attitudes and social norms. Through this Forum, I hope, we will be able to debate and address these far-reaching issues that matter now more than ever.

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