

**Statement by Finland, UNEA1 High Level Segment on Illegal Trade in Wildlife, 26.6.
19:00-22:00**

Delivered by Minister for International Development Mr. Pekka Haavisto

-Thank you, Mme. Chair.

-Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Colleagues,

-The recent dramatic increase in illegal wildlife trafficking and the poaching crisis of African elephants and rhinos demonstrate the seriousness of the issue. Poaching and illegal trafficking are increasingly carried out as part of world-wide criminal activity, and is often accompanied with blatant acts of violence.

-In order to effectively fight the wildlife crime, cooperation at both national and international levels needs to be improved, along the entire enforcement chain. This requires strengthened UN-wide response. The UN General Assembly could address the illegal wildlife trade in its next session. UNEP is well placed to contribute within the UN family.

-It is crucial to address the root causes of the problem. Provision of alternative livelihoods, awareness raising and outreach is required at different levels. This is needed both in consumer and source countries. At the UN level, the efforts could build on UNEP's communications and awareness raising work. In this context, the Global Communication Strategy, which UNEP is developing, will be an important tool.

-Mme. Chair,

-UNEP should focus on supporting the implementation of relevant international instruments and MEAs. Co-operation between CITES and in-situ based conservation Conventions such as the World Heritage Convention, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and Ramsar Convention is also very important.

-As for the illegal logging and related trade of illegal timber and products, there are many existing activities which could be enhanced. The EU Flegt Action Plan is one good example

-Under the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), the review of International Arrangement of Forests (IAF) by 2015 is an integral part of the future development of forestry sector activities at the global level. It is important that such existing initiatives are recognized when consolidating UN-wide action against illegal trade on wildlife.

-Thank you, Mme. Chair.