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**National statement (3min)**

**By Ms. Terhi Lehtonen, Vice-Minister of the Environment and Climate Change,  
Finland**

Distinguished Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here in Nairobi to build a safe, sustainable and environmentally sound future together. Let me first state that Finland strongly condemns Russia's military attack on Ukraine. These actions are a flagrant violation of international law and the UN Charter and threaten the lives of numerous civilians as well as the state of the environment.

[pause]

Finland is rich in nature and natural resources, and both are highly cherished. Finns are privileged in being able to take comfort in nature, such as in our 41 national parks. At the same time, we cannot take nature and its services for granted. Finland, like other countries, is suffering from the climate crisis and biodiversity loss.

As we recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, we need to ensure that the path we choose today is in line with a green and sustainable future that tackles climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution crises. We must transition to fossil free circular economies and make an effective use of nature-based solutions.

The UN Human Rights Council passed a resolution in October 2021, recognizing the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a human right. The resolution calls on governments "To adopt policies for the enjoyment of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as appropriate, including with respect to biodiversity and ecosystems." We need transformative changes as well as holistic, coherent and human rights consistent policies that address several environmental and societal challenges simultaneously.

We need to work across sectors as well as between governments, to halt the loss, degradation, and fragmentation of ecosystems while respecting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. We must

engage young people in these efforts, as they are the ones that will live in the planet that we leave behind. 'Healthy planet, healthy people and healthy nature' is our best insurance for a better future. Therefore, we all should embrace the One Health approach.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the importance of multilateral cooperation and collaboration, especially during these difficult times, to solve the triple crisis. Climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution go beyond national borders and solving them requires science, knowledge sharing and capacity building in addition to actions taken on the national level. Here, UNEP plays a crucial role and I am happy to announce that Finland will be once again contributing above its "fair share" to UNEP's Environment Fund in 2022.

I look forward to our continued collaboration and effective multilateralism to ensure that the future generations can have a sustainable, safe, resilient and healthy planet to live in.

Thank you for your attention.