



Statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States

171th session of the FAO Council

(5-9 December 2022)

Item 9: Reports of the 192th (1-3 June 2022), 193th (27-28 October 2022) and 194th (7-11 November) Sessions of the Finance Committee

Madam/Mr Chair,

1. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, The Republic of North Macedonia, San Marino and Türkiye align themselves with this statement.
3. We will focus our comments on the report of the 194th Session of the Finance Committee. We would like to start by thanking the Chair of the Finance Committee Ms Imelda Smolčić Nijers for her engaging and efficient leadership of the Committee.
4. Overall, we welcome the report. It addresses several important issues that need to be strengthened to further improve governance, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of the FAO.
5. We fully share the Committee's appreciation for the Report of the External Auditor for 2021, both regarding the unqualified audit opinion and for the valuable long form report. Based thereon, we agree that the Council should forward to the Conference the draft resolution by which the Conference will adopt the Audited Accounts.
6. The European Union and its Member States encourage the FAO management to address and implement the outstanding recommendations by the external auditors and the Oversight Advisory committee. In particular, to strengthen the internal control framework to address systemic weaknesses and ensure clarity in formulation and integration between the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and the Strategic Framework and the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), in order to meet the SDG targets and achieve Agenda 2030.

7. We encourage the FAO management to prioritize the development of procedures for handling allegations of misconduct against executive heads and to identify the appropriate legal instruments to implement the Joint Inspection Unit's recommendation.
8. With these remarks we endorse the reports of the Finance Committee.

Thank you, Madam/Mr Chair.
