Excellencies,

The humanitarian situation in Afghanistan is bleak. I have watched with growing concern the plight of the Afghan people as they struggle with their everyday lives in the middle of an escalating humanitarian crisis, deteriorating basic services and economic hardship.

We have a responsibility to help those desperately in need. Finland is committed to providing further humanitarian assistance and support to basic needs in Afghanistan.

Circumstances in Afghanistan have changed dramatically since last August. Afghans have seen their freedoms and human rights shrunk. Many women have watched their opportunities fade. Guaranteeing equal access to education for boys and girls is paramount.

Finland believes that Afghanistan cannot afford to exclude half of its population. Not politically, not economically.

Humanitarian organizations are able to deliver life-saving assistance only if humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law are respected, and full access is granted. Women must be included both as aid workers and as beneficiaries.

Finland will provide 3 million euros in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan through WFP and non-governmental organizations. Over 18 MEUR are available for the year 2022 to address basic needs, to prevent the collapse of basic services, to deliver humanitarian aid and also to support women, girls and human rights. These funds will be channeled through international organizations in a flexible manner.

Thank you.