

**CLOSING STATEMENT BY THE  
CHAIR OF THE  
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

## **CLOSING STATEMENT BY MR PASCHAL DONOHOE, CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

As the Chair of the meeting, I would like to make a few summary remarks on the Roundtable discussion.

This is, as many Governors have acknowledged, the 30th anniversary of the EBRD. Many praised the Bank for the performance over its lifetime. Governors also stressed the continuing importance of the Bank's mandate set out in Article 1 of the Bank's founding charter, including its political aspects – the keystone of our Bank's work, as the Governor for Estonia said.

Today we have played our part in the Bank's history. Your support for and adoption of the Resolution on Climate Ambition is an important signal from finance ministers of their dedication to tackling the climate challenge before us all. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer put it, the Bank's bold commitment to align all investment with the goals of the Paris Agreement from the end of next year is indeed a landmark moment. It sustains the Bank's tradition of leadership.

You underscored the profound consequences of the pandemic. The Bank's swift, strong and relevant response to meet the urgent needs of its clients was widely praised. All the more so when complemented by a very solid financial performance in 2020. On behalf of the Governors, I wish to express our appreciation for the commitment of the Bank's staff.

There is also continued appreciation for the Bank's proactivity and flexibility as we emerge from the crisis-response phase. The relevance of the SCF themes – a low-carbon transition, a digital transition, and equality of opportunity – were strongly reconfirmed. All of these will be a strong driver of growth in our countries of operations as they build economies which are stronger, more inclusive and greener.

Turning to the issues highlighted in the Annual Meeting, and which Odile reminded us of at the outset of this discussion, the recovery from the crisis is uneven. There is a diversity of experience across the Bank's region. Many Governors have emphasised the need for the

Bank to tailor its support to the specific country's circumstances and needs, drawing on its strong local presence.

There was broad agreement that the pillars identified in the management's paper – targeted equity funding, strengthening support for SMEs, and enhanced policy support, as well as the full Paris alignment of projects – provide a solid foundation to support crisis recovery. While endorsing these elements, you encouraged the Bank to use its deep understanding of our countries of operations to respond to emerging opportunities with flexibility and agility; for example, in the strengthening of supply chains, as highlighted by the Governor for Uzbekistan.

The importance of the Bank's distinctive private-sector focus was emphasised by many. Governors also stressed the importance of multilateral collaboration and, in this respect, the Bank was encouraged to work closely and in complementarity with other institutions, each drawing on its own unique strengths. A number of Governors highlighted the interaction with the EIB in particular.

I note that a number of Governors commented on the Resolution and the possible incremental expansion of the Bank's geographic mandate. This is in fact the next agenda item. I know that the President and her team took good note of this important matter, which Governors highlighted to be taken into account over the coming year.

Thank you for your comments. Thank you for your contributions, for your experiences, and showing determination in working together. The thoughts you expressed today will provide guidance for the Bank's future activities as it continues to deliver value for its countries of operations.

Your Excellency, Governors, ladies and gentlemen, it has been a great honour for me to chair this 30th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the EBRD. I am very grateful for the active and constructive contributions from you, Odile, as President, and from all our Governors. It is this quality of engagement that has guided the Bank's transition impact for 30 years and I am certain it will support further success in the years to come.

Allow me to briefly highlight a few key points. First, the overwhelming agreement by the Board of Governors to endorse the EBRD's climate ambition is an important signal of the international community's solidarity on the need for strong steps to address the climate crisis. At its heart, the decision to align all the Bank's activities with the goals of the Paris Agreement from 1 January 2023 is a bold and important step.

Second, the Board of Governors has provided guidance on the work needed to prepare discussions at the 2022 Annual Meeting on a possible limited and incremental expansion to sub-Saharan Africa and Iraq.

Third, we had a rich discussion on the ways in which the Bank can continue to actively support its countries of operations, as the recovery from Covid-19 begins. We still have a long distance to travel here, and the progress towards recovery may well be slow and uneven.

Lastly, I would be remiss if I did not relay the many expressions of appreciation that Governors have made for the Bank's staff and its leadership for their continued efforts in response to the Covid crisis. Shareholders praised the Bank's innovative work to support new and existing clients over the past 18 months. This is a demonstration yet again that the Bank can apply its unique competencies to deliver impact in profoundly challenging situations.

Overall, the last year has captured the essence of the EBRD. The Bank works innovatively, reacts effectively, and answers decisively to the needs of its clients and its shareholders. The Bank has turned the adversity of our volatile times into opportunities to build a greener and better future.

In concluding, I would like to thank the UK for hosting us in virtual format again this year. I take deep pride in being part of this endeavour, and I hope that today, you all feel the same. In closing this Plenary Session, I would like to thank you all; I would like to thank the Vice Chairs for their help this afternoon in the Annual Meeting; and I want to thank all of you for the patience and for the flexibility that you have all shown.