Statement by the Republic of Korea
at the 18th Session of the UNIDO General Conference
3–7 November 2019, Abu Dhabi

Mr. President, Excellencies and Distinguished representatives of Member States,

I would like to first join other delegations in congratulating Your Excellency on your election as the President of the 18th General Conference. My delegation is confident that under your capable guidance this conference will be a great success, and I can assure you of our full support. In addition, the Republic of Korea extends its sincere gratitude to the United Arab Emirates for the excellent arrangements and its warm hospitality in hosting this conference.

My delegation also expresses its sincere appreciation to Director General Li Yong for his continued dedication to deliver on UNIDO’s mandate and priorities. Under his able leadership, UNIDO has become a more effective and results-oriented organization, making great strides in promoting and accelerating the Organization’s goal of Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID).

Mr. President,

Taking this opportunity, the Republic of Korea would like to touch upon three main aspects of its partnership with UNIDO.

First, the Korean government has outlined a new national vision of an “innovative inclusive state where everyone prospers together,” pursuing “an inclusiveness free of exclusion,” in order to tackle the widening socio-economic gap. Last year, President Moon Jae-in stressed the importance of such “inclusiveness” in relations among countries as well. The ROK delegation finds that UNIDO’s goal of ISID fits this vision well, and expects to further strengthen our partnership in order to turn this vision into reality. In this regard Korea welcomes the launch of a new project with UNIDO last August for the sustainable settlement and inclusive growth of Afghan refugees in the Islamic Republic of Iran for the years 2019 to 2022.
Second, capacity building of Member States is also a key pillar of the ROK-UNIDO partnership. Korea’s unique experience of successful industrial development highlights the key role of fostering innovative knowledge and institutional capacity in pursuiting industrial development and economic growth. In this respect, my delegation notes with satisfaction the progress in ongoing capacity building projects for industrial strategy and policy in Cambodia, Cuba and Vietnam, and looks forward to continued cooperation in this thematic area.

Third, as five of the 15 years we set aside to reach the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) will have passed next year, now is the time to redouble our efforts to attain those goals, particularly No. 9 “Building resilient infrastructure promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation”. In light of its own development experience, Korea believes that science and technology will have decisive impacts on achieving SDG 9. My delegation in this regard highly values the new project agreed between Korea and UNIDO this year for developing UNIDO’s strategic framework for STI (science, technology and innovation).

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea recognizes the key role of UNIDO as one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations in promoting inclusive growth and sustainable development. The ROK delegation encourages the Director General to further focus, tailor and align its technical cooperation with Member States’ priorities in order to ensure the Organization’s continued relevance in an evolving development context. With a view to promoting greater effectiveness and enhanced efficiency in UNIDO’s operations, I would like to advance the following three points.

First, my delegation encourages the Secretariat to expand the Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) to include more Member States based on thorough evaluations of the pilot PCPs. We note with appreciation the progress in ongoing PCP projects, including the one in Cambodia supported by Korea. In order to maximize the impact of this initiative, I call on the Secretariat to spare no effort in mobilizing and leveraging more resources to ensure effective and sustainable achievement of intended goals and targets.
Second, Korea supports the repositioning of the UN Development System (UNDS), including the reinvigoration of the UNRC (Resident Coordinator) system. We call for UNIDO’s responsible and constructive engagement in this reform agenda to reap the full benefits for more efficient and effective delivery of its programs. Furthermore, my delegation requests the Director General to address the financial implications of this reform for the Organization in a proper and proactive manner based on close consultations with Member States.

Third, it is essential for the vitality of the Organization to forge stable partnerships with Member States and other stakeholders. It is therefore crucial for UNIDO to enhance accountability for its performance and results. My delegation looks forward to the Director General’s continued efforts to align UNIDO’s priorities with medium-term program framework (MTPF), and integrated results and performance framework (IRPF). ROK also request Director General to update emerging themes related to ISID, such as the inclusion of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in its MTFP for 2018–2021. We also recall the importance of the ongoing MOPAN (Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network) assessment, and hope that this will serve as a chance to enhance the Organization’s effectiveness and raise its visibility in the development community.

Mr. President,

Before closing, my delegation would like to emphasize the essential role of women in promoting ISID. Korea’s experience is a vivid example of how women’s socio-economic empowerment not only contributes to economic growth but also creates multiplying development effects, as it improves a range of indicators such as health and education of families and communities as a whole. We fully support UNIDO’s policy to mainstream a gender perspective in its development programs and expect this consideration to remain a fixture throughout all UNIDO’s activities.

In closing, Mr. President, I would like to reiterate that the Republic of Korea will remain a strong supporter of UNIDO to make ISID a life-changing reality. To this end, we will continue to play our strong role in UNIDO’s partnership activities and support the Organization’s efforts toward ISID. Thank you, Mr. President. /END/