



**Closing remarks by Mr. LI Yong
Director General
United Nations Industrial Development Organization
at the
48th Session of the
Industrial Development Board**

**23-25 November 2020
Vienna, Austria**

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

As we approach the closing of the forty-eighth session of the Industrial Development Board, I would like to express my appreciation to all delegates who participated in this session.

I would like to thank all Members of the Board for their diligent work in preparation of this session and for their valuable contributions that made this virtual meeting a lively, informative and fruitful one.

In particular, I would like to thank the President of the Board, His Excellency Ambassador DJUMALA of Indonesia, for having so effectively steered the deliberations of this virtual session. I thank Mr. Hazem ZAKI of Egypt for acting as Chair of the informal consultations.

It has been a pleasure to work with all of you during this session.

Excellencies,

The Secretariat and I closely followed the deliberations of the Board, and we have taken due note of the various issues that you raised.

I appreciate the many encouraging statements made by delegates, both on behalf of regional groups and in their national capacities.

In your statements, you highlighted the successful cooperation with UNIDO in and with your countries. This includes the progress made in the implementation of the PCPs as an effective means to meet the growing need for industrial development, and UNIDO's role as the lead agency in the operationalization of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa as well as a platform for cooperation with the private sector.

I thank for your strong support for UNIDO's role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. You also commended us for the quick response to the COVID-19 health crisis, and encouraged us to continue address its socio-economic consequences in the post-COVID era, including through a people-centred response.

I would also like to refer to the remarks provided by Secretary-General António Guterres, who emphasized the critical role of inclusive and sustainable industrial development and UNIDO, as we embark on a path towards inclusive, low-carbon, climate-resilient economies.

In your statements, you confirmed that inclusive and sustainable industrial development is critical to climate neutrality, efficient use of resources and the safeguarding of the environment. You highlighted UNIDO's role as catalyst of international environmental initiatives, building a more resilient, greener and sustainable future.

We also took note of your views on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the digitalization of industry and the related upgrading of industrial skills. Our cooperation in this area of work will

increase in importance, particularly for middle-income countries and developing countries alike, and is in line with the Abu Dhabi Declaration that highlights the need to harness the potential of this Fourth Industrial Revolution while minimizing its risks.

Excellencies,

I would also like to thank the Chair of the Audit Advisory Committee, Mr. Elmar VINH-THOMAS, for his presentation and positive assessment of progress in areas reviewed by the Committee. UNIDO values the recommendations of the Committee, and will continue to address the areas that require further attention, including enterprise risk management, gender balance, sufficient resourcing for audit, oversight and evaluation functions, fraud awareness, and technology management.

The Secretariat and I look forward to engaging with the Independent Oversight Advisory Committee with its widened scope of responsibilities.

I appreciate the attention given by Member States to the Organization's internal management initiatives, such as full cost recovery, the resource optimization for technical cooperation initiative, and the approval of frameworks on accountability, internal controls and risks. You have also reminded me of the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women, both at the level of programmatic activities and at the organizational level, and I appreciate your renewed confidence in my leadership.

I very much welcome the commitment expressed by donor countries for a sustainably resourced and efficiently managed UNIDO that pursues cost efficiency and delivers on its mandate.

Your support and guidance will continue to be critical as we transition to a budget based on results-based management principles and begin to develop the next medium-term programme framework in the course of coming year.

We will stay in close dialogue with you and will keep you informed on the various developments.

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Looking at the year ahead of us, the response to the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and building back better and greener will be on the top of our agenda.

At the same time, I am convinced that the Abu Dhabi Declaration will serve as our compass for the way ahead. The Declaration gives us a clear direction for UNIDO's contribution to the 2030 Agenda.

Poverty eradication, addressing inequalities through sustainable economic recovery and our support to least developed and middle-income countries will remain critical. At the same time, I am cognizant that we will need to step up efforts to address the Fourth Industrial Revolution and climate change.

To succeed in this endeavour, UNIDO will continue to innovate, scale up and integrate. Importantly, we will continue to deepen and expand our partnerships with governments, the private sector, UN partners, development financial institutions, academia and civil society.

We will also continue to contribute to the ongoing repositioning of the United Nations development system, and will move forward with our internal management initiatives.

In the year ahead of us, your support and guidance will be critical as we work in partnership to shape the future of the Organization. The key processes will include the development and approval of the programme and budgets 2022-2023 and the medium-term programme framework 2022-2025.

In closing, let me thank you once again for your continued support and the trust you have been placing in the Organization, in our staff and in me. My colleagues and I look forward to continue working in close dialogue with all of you on the important matters that guide the functioning of UNIDO.

Thank you.