



Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 19th Session of the UNIDO General Conference, 29 November – 3 December 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr. President, [H.E. Ambassador Mohamed Mezghani, Permanent Representative of Tunisia]

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I congratulate you on your election as the President of the 19th session of the General Conference. I also congratulate all the bureau members on their election. The Group assures you of its full support and expresses its confidence on the successful outcome of this session under your able guidance and leadership.
2. The Group likewise conveys its appreciation to the Secretariat for the organization of this General Conference, including making available the relevant documents in a timely manner.
3. The Group also takes this opportunity to thank the outgoing President of the 18th General Conference H.E. Eng. Suhail Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Industry of the United Arab Emirates, as well as his bureau, for the achievements during their tenure.

Mr. President,

4. As the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 global pandemic, which continues to take a heavy toll, particularly on the governments, peoples, and industries of developing countries, the Group reiterates the vital responsibility of UNIDO as the central coordinator of international industrial cooperation towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development in the United Nations system. This role has never been more crucial than at this time when many Member States will be relying on the expertise of the Organization to assist in the revival and strengthening of their industrial infrastructures in order to bounce back from the setback of the past two years.
5. The Group, therefore, reaffirms its support of UNIDO in its mandate of facilitating tangible contributions towards economic recovery, capacity building, job creation, poverty reduction, and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 9.

Mr. President,

6. The Group wishes to take advantage of the unique opportunity this particular session of the General Conference presents, when a new Director General is set to take the helm of the Organization and steer it towards a new horizon, for us to convey the expectations and needs of our Member States moving forward, which the Group believes is starting off on the right foot.

7. Along these lines, the Group recalls the Abu Dhabi Declaration adopted by our Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and Representatives at the 18th General Conference in Abu Dhabi, UAE in 2019, which recognized that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, as well as combating climate change and environmental degradation and its impacts are among the greatest global challenges of our times, and that effective international cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation, through the exchange of knowledge, best practices and capacity building and the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, are needed to address these challenges.

Mr. President,

8. The Group echoes the call raised in the Abu Dhabi Declaration for collective action, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and strengthened international cooperation to harness the full potential of new technologies associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, while being mindful that such technologies have both transformative and disruptive capabilities that must be balanced in order to leverage their potential for advancing inclusive economic growth, reduction of inequalities, promotion of resilience, and safeguarding the environment while mitigating their negative effects, such as widening the levels of technology gap between countries, job losses, and threats to industrial safety and security.

9. The Group acknowledges the importance of UNIDO within the context of the United Nations development system, and while we recognize the significance of the synergies and interlinkages between the economic, social, and environmental dimensions towards the common response to the 2030 Agenda, the Group nevertheless wishes to stress that the Organization must first and foremost focus on delivering its mandate of ISID for its many developing Member States and to avoid duplication of functions within the UNDS.

10. The Group reiterates that the developing world is facing challenges in attaining adequate and predictable financing for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID). Additionally, transfer of climate related clean and innovative technologies from the developed to the developing countries is indispensable for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID) and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, the Group requests the Director General to assist the Member States for arrangement of adequate and predictable financing and transfer of clean and innovative technologies to the developing countries for their inclusive and sustainable industrial development. In this regard, the Group requests the Director General to increase the number of Investment and Technology Promotion Offices (ITPO) in the developing countries and expand their services for promotion of investment and transfer of technology.

11. The Group urges UNIDO to further enhance its engagement with Least Developed Countries and developing Member States by becoming a bridge for them to access critical technology platforms, key players in the field of industrialization in the private sector and thought leaders in the area of manufacturing research-and-development, while continuing to concentrate on concrete and tangible field activities.

12. The Group encourages UNIDO to continue advancing inclusive and sustainable industrial development through the Country Programme (CP) and Programme for Country Partnership (PCP), which contributes to promoting the reactivation of the productive sector in an inclusive way, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. The Group likewise encourages UNIDO to continue developing the workplan for the Strategic Framework for Middle-Income Countries to help them avoid falling into or staying mired in the Middle-Income trap by fostering their competitiveness and sustainability in the global market.

14. The Group is encouraged by the efforts taken by UNIDO and all stakeholders in the implementation of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa which has firmly anchored Africa on a path towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development. We call upon UNIDO to develop strategies that align the deliverables of the IDDA III with those of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that accelerate industrial transformation of Africa's economies to meet changing market dynamics and build resilience through a smart manufacturing ecosystem. The Group is hopeful that the recruitment process of the IDDA III Secretariat will be rapidly finalised to operationalise the IDDA III Joint Roadmap.

Mr. President,

15. The Group is cognizant of the financial strains that face UNIDO, which could hamper the fulfilment of its mandate of inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Towards this end, we strongly encourage UNIDO to remain on the path of result-based budgeting and management, maximize the use of the UN Resident Coordinator System, continue to come up with cost-savings and efficiencies, maintain fiscal responsibility, and find ways to enhance its financial resources to avoid any negative impact on technical cooperation, the operation of its field network, and the work of its staff in the Headquarters and field offices.

16. The Group expresses appreciation to governments and institutions who have given voluntary contributions that have facilitated further technical cooperation through UNIDO, while also urging all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time whenever possible.

17. To conclude, the Group of 77 and China is confident that this Conference will provide us with the opportunity for constructive discussions that address the main challenges of the Organization and its Member States towards achieving inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

Thank you, Mr. President.