

Statement to be delivered at the 19th Session of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), 29 November-03 December 2021 (Read against delivery)

General Statement

Mr. President

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your election as the President of the 19th Session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. We have confidence and faith in your abilities and wish to assure you of the complete support of my delegation to achieve the objectives of this session. I would also like to congratulate the members of the bureau and express our appreciation to the Secretariat for making all arrangements and preparations for this session.

Mr. President

Sri Lanka associates itself with the statement made by the Chair of the Group of 77 and China and I wish to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Sri Lanka wishes to reaffirm its support for the mandate of UNIDO in delivering Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID) to all its member States. For developing nations like Sri Lanka, inclusive and sustainable industrialization plays a pivotal role not only in economic but also in social development, through job creation that reduces poverty and helps decrease inequalities and to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 9.

UNIDO interventions have produced industrial value chain development and improved quality infrastructure of Sri Lankan products. We acknowledge UNIDO's technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives both in the public and private sectors in Sri Lanka. UNIDO has been actively contributing to Sri Lanka to improve the country's trade capacity, agri-food sector, environmental protection, energy and industrial development. The Government of Sri Lanka is considering developing a Programme for Country partnership to further enhance the sustainable industrial transformation of our nation with the help of UNIDO.

Mr. President

Covid-19 has negatively impacted industrial production all over the world and middle-income countries such as Sri Lanka have been disproportionately affected by this crisis. The economic impact of the pandemic has placed the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals at considerable risk. While appreciating the efforts that UNIDO have been making to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic since February 2020, we wish to underline that funding of UNIDO is essential for the post-pandemic industrial

recovery of developing countries and we urge the Secretariat to pursue this mandate in this hour of need.

My delegation recalls the Abu Dhabi Declaration adopted at the 18th General Conference in Abu Dhabi, UAE in 2019, which provided the Organization clear indications to accelerate inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) for the realization of the 2030 Agenda by strengthening partnerships with the private sector and harnessing the potential of Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies. We believe 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 objectives.

Having taken note of the reports by Director General on UNIDO activities related to agribusiness, trade, capacity-building, and job creation, and also report on UNIDO activities related to climate change, environment and energy, we wish to stress the crucial role UNIDO plays in providing technical assistance in developing sustainable agriculture systems and shaping the fight against climate change such as steering Industrial development in the direction of a circular economy towards overcome environment crisis and sustain humanity and our planet.

Mr. President

On the dawn of the 55th anniversary of UNIDO, Sri Lanka ambitions to further embody the motto of this year's General Conference "Building a better future" by further enhancing engagement with UNIDO and remains fully committed to support UNIDO's activities in the years to come.

I thank you