



Statement during the 19th Session of the UNIDO General Conference, 29 November – 3 December 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Manizha Bakhtari, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations (Vienna)

Tribute message for Mr. LI Yong, outgoing Director General of UNIDO

Mr. President,

I wish to express deepest gratitude to Mr. LI Yong for successfully leading UNIDO as Director General over the last eight years, despite the difficult situation due to the rapid spread of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

In particular, I wish to express my appreciation for the excellent continued support of UNIDO for Afghanistan in the past years under your able leadership. Your work and vision have highly contributed to strengthening UNIDO's work in advancing inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Afghanistan. The Country Programme (CP) for Afghanistan implemented under your tenure has had many positive impacts for our people.

I also wish to commend Mr. LI's personal continued efforts in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. I was grateful for the close cooperation between Afghanistan and Mr. LI Yong in co-leading the *IGC Vienna Representation Impact Group* together with the Ambassador of Finland in the framework of the International Gender Champions initiative.

I thank you once again for your outstanding work in UNIDO and let me wish you and your family the very best for your future endeavors.

Thank you, Mr. President.