

STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN GROUP DURING THE UNIDO 50TH SESSION OF THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD (IDB), TO BE DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PHILBERT ABAKA JOHNSON, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF GHANA

Mr. President

1. On behalf of the African Group, I would like to congratulate you, Excellency **Ambassador Alejandro Solano, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica** on your election as President of this 50th Session of the Industrial Development Board of UNIDO.
2. Allow me also to congratulate the other Members of the Bureau on their election. The Group would like to assure you all of its full support during this session.
3. The Group also takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to the outgoing Chair of the 49th Session of the IDB, **Her Excellency Ambassador Dominika Krois**, Permanent Representative of Poland, as well as her bureau for a sterling work done at the Session, despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. Further appreciation is extended to the Director General Dr. **Gerd Müller** and the Secretariat for preparing this session.
5. The Group aligns itself with the statement delivered by **His Excellency Ambassador Azzeddine Farhane**, Permanent Representative of Morocco, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

AGENDA ITEM 3: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR 2021

Mr. President,

1. The African Group takes note of the Director-General's 2021 Annual Report, which presents an overview of the activities of UNIDO including the progress, ongoing initiatives, and the outlook of the Organization. The Group welcomes the achievements recorded during the period under review despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The Group welcomes the various initiatives and programmes implemented by UNIDO in 2021 and would like to take note of the last report covering the Medium-Term Programme Framework for 2018–2021 and the Programme and Budgets for 2020–2021. In this regard, the Group stresses the need to continue to search for effectiveness and efficiency in different areas of cooperation in order to achieve the desired objectives of the Organization.
3. The Group is pleased with the continuous efforts of UNIDO to achieve, enhance and accelerate the implementation of inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) through its core functions particularly those

related to technical cooperation, policy advice, research and statistics, normative functions, and standards as well as partnership building.

Mr. President,

4. The Group recognizes the work and efforts undertaken by UNIDO thus far, and requests the Director General and the Secretariat to consult and work closely with Member States on activities and programmes in order to ensure that they are aligned with their national industrialization policy priorities and Goal 9 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
5. Furthermore, the Group appreciates the commitment of the Director General and the Secretariat towards the development agenda for Africa and looks forward to continuing the interactive participation with the Group in the next phase in order to meet the interests and aspirations of African countries with the view to achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development in Africa in line with the African Union Agenda 2063.
6. The Group commends UNIDO's programmes for Africa for technical assistance and capacity-building and encourages UNIDO to emphasize the incentives and benefits of these programmes and their positive development impact in Africa. Furthermore, the Group welcomes UNIDO's engagement with African countries through Country Programmes (CPs) and Programme for Country Partnerships (PCPs) and we look forward to the expansion and extension of these programmes to other Members of the Group, upon their requests.
7. The Group takes note of UNIDO's consultations with Member States on its new initiatives on circular economy, green hydrogen, and climate change. These new initiatives should take into account the needs of African countries to promote best international practices and include technology transfer as a mechanism for sustainable impact on all UNIDO activities with Member States.
8. The Group notes UNIDO's efforts to strengthen partnerships, cooperation, and knowledge sharing among Member States and with relevant stakeholders. In this context, the Group appreciates the establishment of the Office of South-South and Triangular Cooperation within the Office of the Director General.
9. The Group welcomes UNIDO's commitment to strengthen regional approaches that will help align Member States' strategies to take advantage of trade opportunities in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which was launched in January 2021 and provides a \$3 trillion market and 1.3 billion consumers.
10. In addition, the AfCFTA, which is one of the flagship projects of AU Agenda 2063, has a global scope and includes vital areas of the African economy. The AfCFTA also seeks to promote intra-African trade, particularly trade in value-added production and trade in all sectors of the African economy.

Mr. President

11. The Group appreciates the efforts made by UNIDO to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on African countries. In this regard, the group calls for the redoubling of efforts to cope with the post-crisis phase.
12. The Group welcomes the Extraordinary African Union Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification, which will be held on 25th November 2022 in Niamey (Niger) and appreciates the support of UNIDO in the preparation of this Summit.
13. The Group is hopeful that this summit will shed light on Africa's determination and inspire a renewed commitment to industrialization as one of the strategic pillars to achieve economic growth and development on the continent. The Group is confident that this Summit will lead to concrete measures that will promote inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Africa.
14. **In conclusion**, Mr. President, the Group remains committed to supporting the work of UNIDO under the Director-General's leadership and will make further interventions on different agenda items as we continue with our work.

I thank you, Mr President