



Permanent Mission of Italy  
International Organisations - Vienna

**Statement by the Italian Permanent Representative  
Ambassador Alessandro Cortese  
50<sup>th</sup> Session of UNIDO Industrial Development Board  
21 - 23 November 2022  
Agenda item 3 – Annual Report of the Director General for 2021**

Thank you, Madam/Mister Chair.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Member States of the European Union by Ambassador Klement, but I wish to add also some considerations in my national capacity.

First, I would like to begin by thanking Director General Mr. Gerd Mueller for the genuine and thorough commitment he has shown during his first year at the helm of the Organisation. You have accomplished unprecedented work, in just a few months, to reshape the internal structure of UNIDO, to streamline skills and procedures and achieve savings, greater efficiency and effectiveness. The results of these precious efforts have yet to be fully evaluated, but Italy is at your side on this path, Mr. Director General.

Madam/Mr Chair

Italy is firmly committed in supporting the Organization, being one of UNIDO's main donors and providing ideas, innovation, industrial relations and competences.

Through the years, the collaboration with UNIDO has made it possible to promote partnerships and synergies with what we call "sistema Italia", contributing to the dissemination of characteristics of the Italian way of "doing business" (through industrial districts and aggregations of SMEs, consortia, design innovation, quality brands and so on). This original approach qualifies our projects with UNIDO in many sectors, from agro-industry, to creative industry, leather & fashion and many more.

In line with this success story, our financial and technical support to UNIDO continues to improve further through the years. Let me just mention two new initiatives that we are finalizing these months:

1. a Project in Tunisia entitled "Creative Tunisia 2.0", focused on innovation in the craft sector and specifically dedicated to preventing emigration from a country - friend and neighbor of Italy - that needs to preserve its best entrepreneurial energies;
2. The project in Ethiopia entitled "Support to youth and women through products and services development", focused on providing services for promoting products, innovative mindset and start-up development in favour of local talents (especially

women-owned small firms, operators in design, leather, fashion, textile, etc.), also by fostering public private partnership (PPP) engagements.

These two recent examples illustrate well the specificity of the Italian approach in cooperation with UNIDO: the attention to innovation and entrepreneurship; the focus on gender, which for us is extraordinarily important; the promotion of the quality of products and jobs; the upscaling of entrepreneurial relations and the involvement of the private sector.

Mr/Madam Chair,

public-private partnerships are of primary importance for Italy. In recent years, we have managed to build exceptionally important relationships between UNIDO and some excellent Italian entrepreneurial realities. The one with Illy coffee brand is well known, for the projects implemented in the coffee sector in Ethiopia and Mozambique.

But I also want to mention the recently reinforced cooperation between UNIDO and ENI, one of the main European energy companies. ENI has invested 20 million euros for the construction of a training centre on renewable energies in Congo Brazzaville and is developing other fundamental activities on energy transition with UNIDO, including on the production of green hydrogen. To this

regard, we deem it of utmost importance the “Global Partnership on Green Hydrogen in industry” – one of the priorities of DG Mueller – to which we give our financial and technical support.

We are also exploring new private-public partnership in the financial sectors, because we think that UNIDO must expand the sources of co-financing and the financial leverage of its activities. This would imply a “multiplier effect” of available resources, but it would also strengthen the relations between companies and the financial sector, with positive effects on local markets resilience and on beneficiary Countries’ trade relations.

“Progress by innovation” is the new motto of UNIDO. We share this forward-looking approach, just by adding to it, in our projects, a touch of “Italian style”.

Thank you, Madam/Mr Chair.