



**Statement during the UNIDO Industrial Development Board 50<sup>th</sup> session, 21-23  
November 2022, delivered by Ambassador Ms. Manizha Bakhtari, Permanent  
Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

**Under Agenda Item 3: Annual Report of the Director General for 2021**

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**Mr. President,**

My delegation aligns itself with the statement of G77 and China under this agenda item.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as the President of the IDB and other members for their election to the bureau of this session. Under your leadership we are confident that this session will be successful.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the outgoing President, H.E. Madam Dominika Krois, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Poland, and the bureau members for their outstanding work and contributions at the previous session. I would like to also thank the Secretariat for organizing this session.

We welcome the Director General's Annual Report and commend Director General Mr. Gerd Müller efforts and UNIDO's achievements, activities and improvements carried out in the last year.

We strongly encourage the Director General and the Secretariat to continue advancing industrial development and progress of developing countries as stipulated in UNIDO's constitution.

We call for UNIDO's continued support for the development of Country Programmes (CPs) for Afghanistan and UNIDO's continuation of industrial development, technical assistance and capacity building programmes in Afghanistan. Such efforts must continue with a view to save lives and protect livelihoods.

The political change on 15 August 2021 has had an immediate and significant impact on the economy. Afghanistan is facing a humanitarian, economic and development crisis which has been exacerbated by severe droughts, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and high levels of food insecurity.

In particular, the restrictions imposed by the Taliban on women employment and participation has affected the economy greatly. In 2020, according to the World Bank data, women made up 21.6% of Afghanistan's workforce. The ban on female employment and the violations of women and girl's rights are directly slowing down economic growth in Afghanistan. According to the recent UNDP's Socio-Economic Outlook on Afghanistan, the estimated immediate economic

loss of restricting women from working is 5% of Afghanistan's GDP or US\$ 1 billion. The rights of women and girls – including the right to education and to work – must be upheld.

Institutions like UNIDO are critical to address the new economic and development challenges emanating from Afghanistan which has created new forms of inequalities, in particular for women and girls. The role of the UNIDO has become even more important for inclusive and sustainable development of developing countries and we call for increased support from international donors to assist Afghanistan in overcoming the dire developmental crisis.

**Thank you, Mr. President.**