

**STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN GROUP TO BE DELIVERED
DURING THE 51st SESSION OF THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
BOARD (IDB) OF UNIDO, 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 Magdi Ahmed Mofadal Elnour, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Sudan**, on your election as Chair of the 51st 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 of its full support during this session.
3. The Group also takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to the outgoing Chair of the 50th Session of the IDB, **His Excellency Ambassador Alejandro Edmundo Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica** as well as members of that Bureau for a sterling work done during the Session.
4. We further express appreciation to the Director General, **Dr. Gerd Müller** and the Secretariat for preparing this session.

AGENDA ITEM4: REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

Mr. President,

1. The African Group associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. The Group would like to commend the Chair of the 39th Session of the Programme and Budget Committee of UNIDO, **His Excellency Ambassador Aftab Ahmad Khokher, Permanent Representative of Pakistan** as well as the Bureau for a sterling work done during the Session.
3. The Group takes note of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee and wishes to address following issues under sub items (a), (b), (c) and (f) of this agenda item.

Mr. President,

- (a) ***On the Report of the External Auditor 2022***

1. The African Group acknowledges and thanks the External Auditor, Mr. Alexei Kudrin, and the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation for conducting the audit of UNIDO for 2022. The Group notes that the External Auditor's unmodified opinion confirms that UNIDO's financial statements comply with the set rules, standards and regulations.
2. The Group encourages UNIDO to fully implement the recommendations outlined in the report and urges the Secretariat to implement all previous recommendations from the External Auditor's reports.
3. The Group also appreciates the increase in voluntary contributions but recognizes the gap between regular and voluntary resources and requests additional measures to address this situation.

Mr. President,

(b) On the Financial situation of UNIDO, including unutilized balances of appropriations.

1. The African Group notes a slight improvement in the collection rate of assessed contributions and appreciates the payment plans agreed upon with four Member States regarding their arrears.
2. The Group emphasizes the negative impact that delays have on UNIDO's operations and execution of its mandate and, thereby, calls upon all UNIDO Members to endeavor to meet their financial obligations fully and on time.
3. Additionally, the Group commends the Director General's efforts in engaging former Member States to settle arrears and requests expanding the discussion with all former Member States to encourage them to rejoin the organization.
4. The Group strongly encourages UNIDO to exert more efforts towards resource mobilization for all existing programmes.
5. Recognizing the efficiency gains exercise, the Group urges UNIDO to continue seeking efficiencies while ensuring the core functions are unaffected.

Mr. President,

(c) On report of the informal working group on Programme and Budget Committee-related issues (IWG)

1. The Group appreciates the Report of the Informal Working Group (IWG) on Programme and Budget Committee-related issues and thanks the co-

Chairs for their dedicated stewardship.

2. Recognizing the importance of the IWG's mandate, the Group emphasizes its role in facilitating meaningful interactions between the Secretariat and Member States on programme and budget matters.
3. The Group welcomes the IWG's examination of crucial issues, including budgetary flexibility, the transformation of SAVVCA into the "Innovation and Transformation Fund," personnel reforms, and measures to optimize UNIDO's operational efficiency. Additionally, the African Group encourages consultative participation in discussions and the exploration of emerging issues, including the adoption of different project support costs from parties that do not contribute to the regular budget, aiming at strengthening the financial situation of UNIDO.

Mr. President,

(f) On the mobilization of financial resources

1. The Group stresses the central role played by adequate, secure and predictable funding in enabling UNIDO to effectively perform its mandate and carry out its core activities.
2. Furthermore, the Group urges the Director General to continue to explore diverse and innovative funding sources, while at the same time spearheading initiatives aimed at optimizing the use of available resources.
3. The Group is optimistic that the rebranding of the Special Account for Voluntary Contributions for Core Activities (SAVCCA) to the Innovation and Transformation Fund (ITF) will lead to its desired strategic results in maximizing the revenues of the Organization.
4. The African Group welcomes the recommendation of the PBC pertaining to the preparation of strategic guidelines on partnerships and resource mobilization.

I thank you Mr. President.