

**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 ITEM 5: PROGRAMME AND BUDGET, 2024-2025

Thank You Mr. President,

The African Group aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and would like to add the following remarks:

1. The African Group realizes that world is facing cascading crises, which have led to disruption in the global supply chains, drastic increases in inflation, as well as surges in interest rates. Besides, the gap between the developing countries and the developed countries is still huge and often limits the chances of achieving our collective goals of international development or self-reliance. All these factors have negatively affected the ability of the Developing and the Least Developed Countries, including the African Countries, to attain Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development.
2. Hence, the Group believes that UNIDO shall continue its essential efforts in supporting developing countries to achieve this goal and, in this regard, all the needed resources should be availed to UNIDO to implement its

mandate.

3. The African Group notes that UNIDO was able to close the year 2022 with a balanced budget and has managed to increase the implementation of technical projects by 17 per cent in the same period. The Group commends UNIDO for such an achievement while recognizing the challenges of working within limited financial and human resources, balancing savings and income with expenditure and obligations, and coping with shifting demands due to difficult global circumstances.
4. The African Group welcomes the proposal to adopt the Programme and Budgets for the biennium 2024-2025 as agreed upon at the 39th Session of the Programme and Budget Committee in May 2023, and acknowledges that the proposed Programme and Budgets for the period 2024-2025 aligns the priorities of the Programme and Results Framework with the UNIDO Medium Term Programme Framework (MTPF) 2022-2025.
5. The Group further notes that the proposed Programme and Budgets 2024-2025 takes into account the increase in demand for new UNIDO services, including industrial decarbonization and green hydrogen, food security as well as sustainable supply chains, especially at the regional level, and sustainability standards, in addition to circular economy, digitalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.
6. The African Group fully welcomes the proposal to increase the provision of technical cooperation to Member States by up to 25 per cent during the biennium 2024-2025.
7. While the African Group appreciates the Director General's ongoing efforts to implement the needed reforms to reduce costs, including the travel costs, modernize the Organization and make it more efficient, the Group is alarmed at the significant decreases in the UNIDO professional staff, which may severely affect the efficacy and efficiency of the Organization.
8. The Group, therefore, encourages the Secretariat to expedite the recruitment process to fill the vacant positions and requests the Director General to enhance the efforts to recruit and promote professionals from insufficiently represented regions, especially the African region. Along these same lines, the Group calls on UNIDO to make additional effort to strengthen the UNIDO Field Offices to guarantee the productive cooperation between the Organization and the respective African countries to achieve their industrial development priorities.

Thank you Mr. President