



**European Union**

**EU Statement at General Debate**

**20th session of the General Conference  
United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)**

**Vienna, 27 November 2023**

Madam President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: North Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\*, Albania\*, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina\*, and Norway †.

We are gathered in Vienna today under the motto "**Progress by Innovation**" to mark the 57th anniversary of the organisation and to reflect on its achievements. As UNIDO's largest donor, the EU strongly supports Director General Gerd Müller, his leadership and his work to reform the organisation and reinvigorate relations with all its members and partners, including the EU and its Member States.

In line with our leaders reconfirming the SDGs at the recent Summit on 18 and 19 September 2023 in New York, we reaffirm UNIDO's role as a key UN organisation mandated to support its Member States in achieving Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development in line with SDG 9, in close cooperation with other UN agencies and stakeholders.

The EU underlines the urgency of climate action and the importance of an ambitious and forward-looking outcome at COP28 in Dubai. We strongly support UNIDO's new Climate Change Strategy, and call for an action plan and its speedy implementation to accelerate green transition worldwide.

Regrettably, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has slowed down much-needed action on climate change and led to negative effects on energy and food security, especially in the Global South. The EU and its Member States will continue to address food insecurity caused by Russia's war of aggression, including through the EU Solidarity Lanes. The EU is doing its best to help all countries affected by this war of aggression perpetrated by the Russian Federation.

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\* Candidate Countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

† Norway is a member of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

The EU expresses its gravest concern for the deepening humanitarian crisis in Gaza and calls for immediate pauses in hostilities and the establishment of humanitarian corridors, so that humanitarian aid can safely reach the population of Gaza. The EU is the largest international donor of aid to the Palestinians. The EU has quadrupled its humanitarian assistance to Gaza in 2023 to over €100 million and has launched a Humanitarian Air Bridge operation in aid to the people affected by the crisis. In line with the European Council Conclusions of 26 October, the EU re-emphasizes Israel's right to defend itself in line with international law and international humanitarian law. The EU reiterates the importance of ensuring the protection of all civilians at all times in line with international humanitarian law.

Madam President,

The EU remains fully committed to the Agenda 2030 and its UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Addis financing agenda, with a focus on Least Developed Countries.

To demonstrate this and accelerate its implementation, the EU has launched the Global Gateway initiative, which is implemented through a Team Europe approach involving EU Institutions, EU Member States, development banks, financial institutions and partner countries. Between 2021 and 2027, we will mobilise up to EUR 300 billion of investments for sustainable and high-quality projects across the digital, energy and transport sectors in Africa, Asia, Central Asia and the Pacific, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Global Gateway helps partner countries tackle the most pressing global challenges, from climate change, to improving health systems, bridging the digital divide, increasing transport and energy connectivity, education and research and boosting competitiveness and security of global supply chains. This involves a focus on values, high environmental and labour standards, good governance, transparency, and sustainability in order to ensure lasting benefits for people and the planet.

We are pleased to see that UNIDO's priorities are very much aligned with the Global Gateway, and we are therefore further strengthening our cooperation. New EU-funded UNIDO projects in the Southern Mediterranean and Africa are forthcoming for more than EUR 60 million in the field of renewable energy, circular economy, SMEs, market access, food safety and youth empowerment.

Guided by the Lima and Abu Dhabi Declarations, we must continue mobilising the private sector to create decent work along the supply chain, especially in sectors that upgrade jobs and skills. The EU supports UNIDO's role in the implementation of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa in cooperation with other donors. The EU's Aid for Trade Strategy contributes to the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area and helps partner countries better integrate into the global

trading system. This will create jobs and reduce poverty, hunger, and inequality while contributing to resource efficiency, clean energy, and decarbonisation of industries.

Madam President,

Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women is at the heart of EU policies. The EU finds it important that gender mainstreaming is systematically carried out throughout all UNIDO's programmes and projects. UNIDO has made considerable progress under the UN System-wide Action Plan, meeting or exceeding requirements in all 17 performance indicators but one in 2022. The EU welcomes the development of the new UNIDO Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and supports the draft General Conference resolution tabled by Norway and Mexico.

In conclusion, Madam President, we reiterate our full support for your efforts to have a productive General Conference and look forward to engaging in an open and constructive dialogue.

Thank you, Madam President.