



ZIMBABWE

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE**

HON. DR. SITHEMBISO G. G. NYONI

GENERAL DEBATE

**20TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION GENERAL
CONFERENCE**

27 NOVEMBER TO 01 DECEMBER 2023.

**President of the 20th Session of the General Conference, Madam
Debora Lepre**

Your Excellency, Director General - Gerd Muller,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my singular honour and pleasure to address this auspicious occasion, the 20th Session of the UNIDO General Conference (GC 20).

I would like to congratulate you, Your Excellency, Ms Debora LEPRE, on your election as the President of the 20th Session of the General Conference. Zimbabwe assures you of our support and cooperation during your tenure.

Let me also thank the outgoing President, His Excellency, Ambassador Mohamed MEZGHANI, Permanent Representative of Tunisia, for his exemplary leadership during the 19th Session.

The Government of Zimbabwe appreciates the Director-General Gerd Muller's opening remarks and more critically, that he continues to champion the promotion of inclusive and sustainable industrialization through localized value chains since he assumed office.

Madam President,

Zimbabwe aims to become an Empowered and Prosperous Upper Middle Income Society by 2030. Despite being under sanctions, Zimbabwe is making visible strides towards industrialization based on our local human and natural resources.

Through the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development, we are now food self sufficient with surplus maize and wheat for human consumption and supply to our industrial value chains.

In line with **Education 5.0 strategy**, **our universities** are developing industrial hubs and creating new products for both our value chains and for the creation of new products and industries.

The Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Zimbabwe have created more than 4.8 million full time jobs, while industry is diversifying with over 85% of our retail and wholesale shelves space coming from locally produced goods. This robust and inclusive strategy is accelerating Zimbabwe's economic growth.

Zimbabwe acknowledges the pivotal role that UNIDO continues to play in fostering global economic growth and pledge our unwavering

support to initiatives that promote development of inclusive and innovative industries for the improvement of our people's lives.

We are confident that the current field office network reforms will further strengthen UNIDO role, more so, in light of the various programmes being championed by the Director General, through this clear response to climate change, the 3rd Industrialization Decade for Africa (IDDA III), as well as, the UNIDO strategy for Africa 2023-2025, and the promotion of the circular/ green economy as viable solutions to current global challenges.

Madam President,

The Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) modality still remains a viable framework that has facilitated inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Africa and other regions. Zimbabwe has noted with excitement that UNIDO will continue to expand this creative framework to enhance localized value chains and productive capacities that benefit our disadvantaged communities.

Technology and skills development as well as digital inclusions are critical in economic diversification and enhancing productive capacities in our countries. This will lead to the narrowing the global digital divide and thus reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities in our societies.

In Zimbabwe, the industrial sector is expanding at the back of growing innovations through the innovation hubs established in institutions of higher learning across the country. Technology hubs are producing quality products making Zimbabwe self sufficient in both technology and skills development as opposed to the notion of skills transfer.

We appreciate UNIDO's continued support to Zimbabwe through its Country Programme Framework, and it is our hope that the cooperation framework will also be upgraded to PCP in the near future. It is our hope that with this programme, UNIDO will be actively involved for the benefit of the Zimbabwean people and other upcoming economies.

Government of Zimbabwe is implementing the ease of doing business reforms and infrastructure development aimed at laying a firm foundation for attracting more partnerships and private sector led economic growth.

As I conclude, let me reconfirm that Zimbabwe is ready to actively participate in the collective pursuit of global well-being and sustainable development in line with United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I submit