

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY !**

Statement by

**Slovenia**

at the 20th session of the General Conference  
of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization  
Vienna, 29 November 2023

*Thank you Madam President and good afternoon to everyone,*

At the outset we would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election. In addition to the Statement delivered by the EU, I would like to deliver some remarks in my national capacity.

Since becoming a donor country in 2005, Slovenia has financially supported more than 30 technical cooperation projects in different regions and amongst others focusing on knowledge and technology transfer, supporting small and medium enterprises, as well as on protection of the environment. A Roadmap for Cooperation signed last year in June has upgraded our cooperation and was complemented by an Agreement on Cooperation, which entered into force just this week. Currently, new joint projects that will benefit to developing countries and contribute to the inclusive and sustainable industrial development are being developed. On this occasion, we would like to thank UNIDO for our long-standing and fruitful partnership.

Slovenia is a promoter of a strong and effective multilateral system. The latter is crucial for managing mutual interdependencies in ways that enhance national and global welfare and the role of UNIDO in these efforts is indispensable. But to be able to respond to global challenges, such as hunger, poverty, climate crisis and environmental degradation, the Organisation needs to be fit for purpose, including with a solid and stable financial basis. In this context, we were pleased that the budget discussions held at the Programme and Budget Committee Session in May brought a good result.

*Madam Chairperson,*

On Tuesday, at the event titled “Making gender equality a lived reality in industry” we have heard a well-known fact. The industry sector remains to be a strongly male dominated field. Women do not have equal opportunities, they face barriers. Even more, women’s rights are being eroded all around the world. For Slovenia as a strong advocate for gender equality it is clear: without recognising and unlocking vast potential of half population of the world we cannot achieve sustainable development.

We therefore commend UNIDO for its efforts in addressing this concerning reality, including by systematically mainstreaming gender aspects in all programmes and projects. We welcome the new UNIDO Strategy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and we support the resolution tabled by Norway and Mexico to this General Conference. We also encourage the Director General to strengthen his efforts related to achieving gender parity, particularly at the middle and senior management level of UNIDO staff, and Member States to nominate female candidates for these positions.

Gender equality is a priority aspect of all Slovenian development cooperation projects, which we also implement through UNIDO. The Guidelines for Gender Equality in International Cooperation, adopted in June, stem from three approaches: human rights based approach, gender-transformative approach and intersectional approach. Because we believe, that only this way, we will be able to address the root causes of gender inequality and to promote the empowerment of women in a more targeted and effective manner, also in the context of the inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

*Thank you.*