

General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Speech for His Excellency the Minister of Industry and Mineral Resources

President of the General Conference

Mr. Gerd Müller, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to extend my congratulation the Director General and all members of the Organization on the occasion of the 57th anniversary of UNIDO's founding. I would also like to congratulate Her Excellency, the Italian Ambassador Deborah Libre on her election as President of the twentieth session of the General Conference. On this occasion, we reaffirm our full support and cooperation with the Organization to achieve comprehensive and sustainable industrial development.

As a member of UNIDO, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has strived to enhance collaboration and increase cooperation on global issues such as sustainable energy, decarbonization in industry, and the circular economy. We are committed to further developing this cooperation in alignment with the ambitious goals of Saudi Vision 2030, and its related strategies.

Today, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is undergoing significant transformation, thanks to Saudi Vision 2030. This vision primarily focuses on economic diversification through two strategic pathways: the first is maximizing the economic return from existing sectors and natural resources, such as oil and gas, industry, trade, and logistics. The second is expansion into new key sectors, including mining, tourism, entertainment, and sports, with the aim of building a vibrant society and a prosperous economy.

As a result of this major transformation, numerous programs and initiatives have been developed to achieve these goals. Among the most significant is the National Industrial Development and Logistics Services Program (NIDLPS), which aims to maximize the economic revenue of sectors such as industry, mining, energy, and logistics services. From this program, several national strategies have emerged, including the National Industrial Strategy, the mining and minerals industries strategy, the localization strategy, and the exports

strategy, along with supporting strategies such as the National Transport and Logistics Services Strategy, and the National Energy Strategy.

For example, the National Industrial Strategy aims to transform the Kingdom into a leading industrial power and a global logistics hub. This includes developing 12 targeted industrial sectors, categorized into three groups. The first group addresses local needs and national security, covering areas such as food security, pharmaceutical security, military security, water, and others. The second group focuses on maximizing benefits from the Kingdom's comparative advantages, such as oil, gas, petrochemicals, mining, and geographical location, targeting industries like advanced petrochemicals and value-added metals, and transforming the Kingdom into a global logistics platform. The third group aims to position the Kingdom as a leader in advanced industries related to the future, such as renewable energy, biotechnology, the electric car industry, and aviation and space.

By 2030, the national industry strategy aims to bring the total value of additional investments in the sector to 1.3 trillion riyals, triple the industrial GDP to approximately 895 billion riyals, double the value of non-oil exports to 557 billion riyals, and create tens of thousands of quality jobs in the sector. It also aims to increase the Kingdom's exports of advanced technical products sixfold.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a relatively short period, the Kingdom has achieved great successes in the mining sector. This began with the exploration of vast natural resources, estimated at about 1.3 trillion US dollars, including gold, silver, copper, zinc, phosphate, bauxite, and other industrial minerals. Strategic plans have been developed to exploit these resources, and the mining investment law was issued to create a conducive investment environment for mining companies and encourage investment in the field. This culminated in strengthening international partnerships by annually hosting the Future Minerals Forum in Riyadh under the patronage of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques.

This global event brings stakeholders in the mining industry to discuss current trends, address challenges, exchange information, and build relationships. It embodies the Kingdom's contribution to global challenges in providing minerals for achieving zero neutrality goals and advanced industries, as well as addressing supply chain issues.

Convinced that true wealth lies in human capabilities, The Kingdom, under the leadership of His Highness the Crown Prince, has focused on developing talents and human resources. The Human Capabilities Development Programme, a key initiative of Saudi Vision 2030, aims to enhance the competitiveness of national human capabilities locally and globally, enabling continuous learning and development of its citizens'. Additionally, the Research, Development and Innovation Development Authority was established to position the Kingdom as a world leader in innovation, fostering a culture of innovation and developing highly skilled researchers and entrepreneurs to transform research results into industrial products that add economic value to society.

These reforms have led to many successes in terms of competitiveness and ease of doing business indicators. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ranked 17th globally out of 64 countries in the Global Competitiveness Yearbook report by the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), supported by strong economic and financial performance in 2022, and improved business legislation. This ranking place the Kingdom third among the G20 countries for the first time, outperforming economically advanced countries.

Reforms in women's empowerment reforms have also led to significant progress reflected in various local and global indicators. According to the World Economic Forum report, women now represent 34% of the workforce in Saudi Arabia. In the industrial sector, women's participation has increased by 93% over the past three years, in line with the goals of Saudi Vision 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committed to supporting UNIDO in achieving its goals, recognizing its importance, global status, and pivotal role in supporting industrial development plans. This aligns with the Kingdom's ambitions in industrial development, securing global supply chains, and being a partner in manufacturing, export, transportation, and logistics services.

We look forward to hosting the 21st session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in the year 2025, which represents an important event for exchanging ideas and

discussions changes in industry, especially the Fourth Industrial Revolution, advanced industries, automation, new business models, and the challenges facing the world. In achieving sustainability and global supply chains, raising the level of cooperation and participation in the organization's decision-making and industrial policies, and supporting sustainable development in a way that serves member states.

The Kingdom will also work to harness all capabilities and in close coordination with the organization to facilitate the participation of all delegations of member states and work to host a successful general conference with positive outcomes that contribute to strengthening international partnerships to push towards achieving comprehensive and sustainable industrial development.

Dear attendees,

The Kingdom has successfully hosted major international events, exhibitions, and conferences in various fields, organizing impactful events on both local and international levels. Recent examples include the Saudi Arab and Islamic summits, the Saudi African summit, the Arab-Islamic summit, and multiple editions of the Future Investment Initiative, the World Defense Show, the Future Minerals Forum, and others. These events have significantly enhanced the Kingdom's position as a preferred destination for important events and global investments.

In conclusion, I invite you to discover the diversity and beauty of our country, and to witness the remarkable and rapid progress the Kingdom is making at all levels. As one of the largest economies in the Middle East, supported by modern and prosperous cities and giant tourism projects such as Neum, the Red Sea, Diriyah, and Qiddiya, the Kingdom offers stunning natural landscapes that gives visitors a unique experience.

Thank you for your time and may peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.