

UNIDO – 52nd Industrial Development Board
Statement by H. E. Mr Rüdiger Bohn, Permanent Representative,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of the Federal Republic of Germany
25 - 27 November 2024

Agenda Item 8 – Climate neutral industry and circular economy

Chair, Excellencies, Director-General, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have taken note of UNIDO's documents on these topics and of the Member States' comments.

Germany fully supports the statement made by the European Union and its member states on this agenda item.

I would like to add a few remarks on behalf of Germany.

At the end of 2021, the 19th General Conference of UNIDO agreed on a resolution to establish a Climate Change strategy. That strategy was discussed and finalized during 2023. The year 2024 is dedicated to the Action Plan of the Strategy, with time targets and indicators. Germany has been a firm supporter of the Climate Change strategy right from the beginning. And we appreciate the rapid advancements made, mainstreaming decarbonization and climate neutrality into UNIDO's daily work. The Action Plan basically has two parts, one about UNIDO's work towards the world outside, the other about UNIDO's necessary internal skills. Both parts are important, and I was glad to hear that the respective inputs are in the right proportion.

We welcome UNIDO's efforts to promote the circular economy. The transition to a circular economy is a global endeavour. It requires close cooperation between stakeholders along value chains and across national borders. For this reason, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development founded the PREVENT Waste Alliance in 2019 – a platform for exchange and international cooperation and our flagship for joint action for a circular economy along global value chains.

Germany welcomes UNIDO's commitment to establishing the Global Alliance on Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency (GACERE) as an alliance of governments committed to promoting the circular economy at the global level.

The circular economy has great potential to create new jobs while protecting the environment. To realize this potential, under German development cooperation more than 20 countries worldwide are being supported in their efforts to develop towards a circular economy and reduce pollution from waste. For example, we are supporting Albania in improving waste management in a climate-friendly way. Through publicity campaigns, digital applications and better cooperation between the private sector and informal waste collectors, local recycling rates have been significantly increased.

(Neues Projekt v. BMUV mit Partnerorganisation / Unterauftragnehmer UNIDO für IND, BRA und ZAF)

Germany appreciates UNIDO's active participation in the ongoing negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. As part of the High Ambition Coalition, Germany's aim is to conclude the negotiations in 2024 and agree on an ambitious, fair, transparent and non-discriminatory international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution.

On the topic of reducing and avoiding plastics in production and in waste management, there is a similar work stream within the WTO (World Trade Organization) that Germany follows closely.

Germany is one of the 82 WTO members that are participating in the Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade (DPP), along with the EU and its other member states. The Dialogue was launched in November 2020 as an initiative to explore how the WTO could contribute to efforts to reduce plastics pollution and promote the transition to more environmentally sustainable trade in plastics. At the latest WTO Ministerial Conference in Abu Dhabi in February of this year, the states involved in the Dialogue published a Ministerial Statement, reinforcing their commitment to advance these issues. Germany will be glad to continue its support for this initiative going forward, as it is a cause that is in all our interests.

To conclude, we are grateful for UNIDO's leadership in working towards a climate-neutral, circular economy that leaves no one behind, and we look forward to deepening our collaboration on this topic and beyond.

Thank you for your attention.