

UNIDO General Conference 2017: Ireland's National Statement

Madame President

Ireland aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and delivers these remarks in its national capacity.

I wish to warmly congratulate Director General Li Yong on his re-election and for his determined leadership. His contribution has been crucial to the effort to revitalise UNIDO and to restore its relevance to our common objective of sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Ireland welcomes this conference with its focus on the Sustainable Development Goals and on partnership. SDG 17 calls on us all to strengthen the means of implementation and to work in partnership.

The SDGs will not be met if the poorest and most marginalised people continue to be left behind while progress is made elsewhere and for others. Ireland places a very high value on the idea of Leaving No One Behind, a principle which underpins the SDGs and which emphasises both the goal of completely ending extreme poverty by 2030 and of addressing the needs of marginalised and vulnerable groups and those in fragile and conflict affected states.

We do not see industrial development policy as a luxury to be enjoyed only by the most advanced economies but a vital development tool for all. UNIDO has the capacity and the expertise to play an important role, in partnership with Governments, other UN organisations, donors and civil society in supporting country led industrial development strategies. For this reason we welcome the introduction of Partnership Country Programmes which are a means of scaling up UNIDO's country level impact and also a recognition that development, if it is to be successful, must be country led and in line with the frameworks and priorities established by Government.

The concept of Integrated Agro Industrial Parks which is an important component of the Partnership Country Programmes and the linkages between these Parks and the huge rural economies of some developing countries, could, if successfully managed and developed, provide an important platform for moving the output of low income

farmers up the value chain. We look forward with interest to the interim evaluation of this particular feature of the PCPs.

Implicit in the idea that no one should be left behind is the principle of equality. The promotion and protection of human rights and the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment are key components of the Irish Government's policy for international development and Ireland's broader foreign policy. Ireland will continue to advocate for the empowerment of women and girls in our chairmanship of the Commission on the Status of Women this year and next.

We strongly believe that it is not possible to make lasting progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals if we do not make gender a central part of all our work. UNIDO has made progress in this respect in recent years, and we recognise and commend Director General's Li's strong personal and professional commitment to building on this and integrating gender into everything UNIDO does.

For our part, we strongly believe that investments in gender equality and women's empowerment can have a transformative impact on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and in particular on achieving gender equality, sustainable economic growth and ending poverty. We warmly welcome the inclusion of several events during this conference which foreground gender and issues relating to gender, and we hope that this issue will remain at the foreground of UNIDO's work in the years to come.

We do however note with regret that the important panel discussion on Industry 4.0 at this year's General Conference features one woman and ten men, aside from the female moderator. We believe it important in our discussions at all of the panel meetings held by all the organisations in this building to strive for gender balance in the panels.

Finally, Madame President, I will conclude by emphasising that for many small economies the development of an industrial development policy goes hand in hand with the preservation of an open rules based global economy. The free flow of goods across borders, regulated through multilateral agreements and supervised by the World Trade Organisation, lies at the core of global development in recent years. If the international trade system were to falter through a reversion to protectionism

and the reestablishment of national trade barriers, even the best national industrial development strategies will not be able to withstand the negative economic impact.

[Thanks]