

Madam President,

As this is the first occasion on which I am addressing this meeting, allow me to begin by congratulating you on your election as president of the 17th General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. I would also like to extend my congratulations to all members of the bureau. Allow me also to convey my appreciation to the secretariat for their work in preparing this meeting and to express my appreciation to our outgoing president, Ambassador Stix-Hackl of Austria.

I would like to associate myself with the delegations before me in congratulating Mr. Li Yong on his re-election to the post of Director-General of UNIDO. Brazil's early support of Mr. Yong's candidature reflects our recognition of the great strides UNIDO has made during Mr. Yong's first term in office. We are and will remain a staunch supporter of the organization's goal of advancing the aims of sustainable and inclusive development and we are keen to see further progress in this arena, with particular attention to the needs of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this regard, I would like to reiterate the positions expressed in the statement of the Group of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Madam President,

The choice of the theme for this year's General Conference - "Partnering for impact - Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals" - is timely and appropriate. It is a reminder that we cannot achieve the development goals alone. To implement the 2030 Agenda we must work to-

gether and forge partnerships. This way, we will be able to advance a shared agenda that is inclusive and comprehensive, an agenda that welcomes new concepts such as the circular economy and Industry 4.0 and that addresses the needs of states at different levels of development so that our societies can prosper together.

Madam President,

Brazil has a long history of facing the challenges of development. In the 20th century, the transition from a rural to an urban society and the industrialisation process that accompanied this change resulted in quick progress with Brazil becoming one of the largest economies in the world. UNIDO can play an important role in helping us continue building a country whose prosperity can be shared by all but also contribute to the progress in our region and in other developing countries.

I would like to illustrate this point by making a quick reference to some of the projects that UNIDO has been conducting in Brazil and that reflect this vision.

In the scope of the Global Environment Fund, we have seen great strides in the Brazil-UNIDO biogas project of application for the agro-industry. While Brazil has a tradition of promoting renewable energy, this project will help us further explore and develop biogas solutions in our production chain, particularly in small- and medium-sized agro-industries. This project - which is being carried out thanks to a partnership between UNIDO and the International Center for Renewable Energy-Biogas, located in the State of Parana - is a good example of the benefits that

the circular economy can bring to the countryside. It is a project that addresses not only the energy needs of meat producers in a self-sustainable way, but also the need to manage the waste generated by manure in an environmentally friendly manner. We hope it can be replicated in the future in other countries that have to deal with the challenge of generating clean and renewable energy while preserving the environment.

Since 2015, Brazil and UNIDO began partnering to assist our country in meeting the targets of the Montreal Protocol, by developing solutions to reduce HCFCs. The project is now in its stage 2, which is helping 28 Brazilian manufacturers of refrigeration and air conditioning equipment to phase out HCFC-22 from their production process and adopt a zero-potential ozone depletion technology alternative with low impact to the global climate system.

These projects illustrate the potential of the cooperation with UNIDO in helping us continue developing expertise and technologies that could be also beneficial to other countries. In the critical field of energy production, which, as we know, is often a barrier to development, Brazil has a successful record in exploring the potential of new energy sources and improving the use of time-tested technologies. This is reflected in our energy matrix, which relies heavily on hydropower and renewable sources such as ethanol and biofuels and still is able to maintain internationally competitive costs.

Madam President,

In this connection, I would like to reiterate a call for a stronger presence of UNIDO in Latin America. The projects that I have just mentioned provide us with a glimpse of the great potential for UNIDO in our region. As the Ambassador of Argentina had the opportunity to remind us in the GRULAC statement, GRULAC countries received only 4% of all UNIDO projects in 2016. This figure not only ignores the needs of Latin America and the Caribbean but it also shows that UNIDO is not taking advantage of the huge potential for partnerships in the region.

In a similar vein, we look forward to seeing a large number of nationals from the countries in our region in the staff of UNIDO. A more balanced representation means that we will be better equipped to contribute with our expertise and experience to create a more efficient and effective organization. I hope this situation will have been addressed by the time we meet again for the 18th General Conference.

Madam President,

In closing this statement, I want to make a call to all Member States to continue supporting the work of UNIDO. UNIDO is an organization that delivers concrete results that change the lives of people. In promoting development and prosperity, the work of UNIDO helps create a world that is more just and peaceful, thus helping to fulfil the objective of not letting anyone behind. This is a vision that Brazil shares. We will continue to support UNIDO and its programs.

Thank you, Madam President.