

AS DELIVERED



**Statement of Mr. LI Yong
Director General
United Nations Industrial Development Organization**

at the

**Closing of the
Seventeenth Session of the
UNIDO General Conference**

**1 December 2017
Vienna, Austria**

Madame President of the General Conference,

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Colleagues and friends,

As the 17th session of the UNIDO General Conference comes to an end, allow me to address you briefly to review and summarize the past few days. The short video message that you have just seen shows the hard work you have done and the successful results achieved.

Let me start by congratulating you, Madame President, and the Vice-Presidents for the effective manner in which the plenary meetings were conducted. We also thank the Chairperson of the Main Committee and the Vice-Chairs for their skill in building consensus during the sessions.

I also wish to thank the delegations for their important contributions to these deliberations, and for the spirit of consensus that has led to the adoption of a number of important decisions and resolutions which will guide us in the years to come.

Looking at the General Conference alone and not counting the many participants in side-events, over 540 delegates participated in this year's General Conference, representing more than 122 Member States, including two Heads of State, and 54 Ministers and high-level dignitaries. In addition, 128 participants from our sister agencies, development agencies, the

private sector and civil society joined the side-events. We also appreciate the interest of former UNIDO Member States that participated in the Conference in an observing role.

I would like to thank all delegates for their participation, and in particular those of you who traveled to Vienna on this occasion.

We also welcomed the opening remarks by the President of the General Assembly, who expressed very clearly why inclusive and sustainable industrial development is important to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At this General Conference we have sought to show you, in word and deed, the efforts we have made and some of our achievements of the past years.

We have done this through the Sixth ISID Forum, the UNIDO Donor Meeting and the launch of the 2018 Industrial Development Report, which were integrated into the plenary sessions of the General Conference.

We also organized a variety of special events and exhibitions on the margins of the Conference, such as the World Women Leaders Talk, a TEDx

Talk on the circular economy, and a panel discussion on the opportunities of Industry 4.0.

At a breakfast meeting we jointly explored the gender dimension of inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Yesterday afternoon, a high-level panel discussed the strategies and best practices to enhance Africa's industrialization within the framework of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa.

We are very pleased with your positive response, and the guidance that we have received from all of you in the context of these events.

In addition, outside the meeting rooms, we offered an opportunity to enter in direct dialogue with experts in the format of knowledge hubs, an innovation zone, and a networking zone. I would like to thank all excellent panels for their well-prepared and active participation in the discussions.

Let me express my appreciation to all UNIDO colleagues for organizing the General Conference, as well as the various side events and exhibitions. Special thanks go to technicians and interpreters for their contributions to the success of the Conference. Without their hard work we could not have achieved this successful General Conference.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

During this week, we have spent valuable time deliberating on many complex issues, and have adopted a number of important decisions for our Organization.

For the following year, I appreciate the valuable contributions from all of you.

The Secretariat is pleased that the General Conference adopted the Programmes and Budget 2018-2019 and the Medium-term programme framework 2018-2021 that will support and guide our work for the next four years. We will continue and further accelerate our efforts to better integrate and scale up our operations and impact, and to achieve greater results-orientation and effectiveness.

We welcome the appointment of the Auditor General of the Philippines as the External Auditor for UNIDO for the period from July 2018 to June 2020.

We are grateful that the General Conference has adopted the Ministerial Declaration for the Least Developed Countries. Member States in this group are highly vulnerable and face severe structural impediments to sustainable development. We acknowledge the need to pay special

attention to the countries that most urgently need inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

At the same time, over two thirds of the world's poor people live in middle-income countries. A large number of UNIDO's Member States belong to this group of countries. I am therefore also very pleased about the adoption of a related resolution, which tasks the Secretariat to adopt a strategic framework on inclusive and sustainable industrial development in middle-income countries.

We also appreciate the guidance given to the Secretariat on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and on UNIDO activities in energy and the environment.

As I already mentioned in my opening statement, I am fully committed to implementing my pledges as International Gender Champion and will continue to engage at all levels to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Also the supportive resolution on the Programme for Country Partnerships is very welcome, as it shows your intention to accompany us while we gradually and cautiously expand the PCPs to other countries. We will share the results of the mid-term evaluation as soon as available and engage in a close and transparent dialogue as we progress.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In addition to the resolutions you passed, allow me to also highlight a few other significant results of this General Conference. I am pleased to announce that in the context of this General Conference we were able to sign several funding and cooperation agreements and declarations.

Most prominently, during the opening ceremony, the President of the Swiss Confederation and I signed the agreement concerning a Swiss contribution of CHF 17.35 million to strengthen our cooperation in the area of quality and standards to support SMEs in accessing global markets. In addition, China announced a 24 million contribution for the next four years.

A memorandum on the strategic partnership with the Russian Federation was signed with the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation on Tuesday.

The joint declaration signed with Cambodia lays the foundation for a Programme for Country Partnership planned for the period 2018 to 2023.

A strategic framework agreement was also signed with Thailand on the same day.

With the signing of relationship agreement with the Eurasian Development Bank we gain a new partner to facilitate the private-public dialogue on investment-related policy issues.

We are also grateful for the contributions received from the Government of Italy and the Austrian Development Agency during this week, for SME development in Myanmar and the operationalization of a sustainable energy centre in Central America.

Excellencies,

Colleagues,

In concluding this General Conference, I would really like to thank you once again for your continued support and strong encouragement.

Your unwavering support and guidance in these very challenging times reassures us that we are on the right track to fulfil our mandate of inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

My colleagues and I look forward to continue working in close dialogue with all of you in the course of the next years.

As I stated in my opening remarks, *together* we can achieve the most daunting tasks ahead of us. It is in partnership that we can enhance the impact of our efforts. Partnership is thus very important for us to move ahead.

Finally, I am grateful for the trust you have placed in me. There is an Asian saying: "Promise must be kept and action must be resolute." I will follow this saying.

Thank you.