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UNIDO opens office in South Africa

Vienna, 19 April 2006 — The Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Kandeh K. Yumkella, and South Africa's Minister of Trade and Industry Mandisi Bongani Mabuto Mpahlwa formally opened the UNIDO office in South Africa today, by signing the host country agreement at a ceremony in Pretoria.

UNIDO's South African office will be a Sub-Regional Office, covering: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa: Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Government representatives from these countries also attended the official launching.

The Office will be based in Pretoria and headed by UNIDO Representative Stefano Bologna. The newly appointed director, an engineer from Italy, has extensive work experience in the private sector, as well as with UNEP and UNIDO.

The UNIDO Office in South Africa will provide the countries of the region with technical support and advice on industrial development issues, as well as project assistance. It will also interact with financial and multilateral development institutions in the area.

The South Africa office brings to 22 the number of UNIDO offices in Africa. UNIDO is now represented in some 40 countries worldwide, either by a designated country or regional office or by a UNIDO desk located within a UNDP country office. Additionally, it operates a network of 19 investment and technology promotion offices and units, 35 National Cleaner Production Centres, 10 International Technology Centres and 44 Subcontracting and Partnership Exchanges in various countries.

Note for editors

UNIDO is a specialized agency of the United Nations that works towards improving the quality of life of the world's poor by helping countries achieve sustainable industrial development. UNIDO views industrial development as a means of creating employment and income in order to overcome poverty. It helps developing countries produce goods they can trade on the global market, and helps provide the tools – training, technology, and investment – to make them competitive. At the same time, it encourages production processes that will neither harm the environment nor place too heavy a burden on a country's limited energy resources. UNIDO has 171 Member States and has its headquarters in Vienna, Austria (please visit www.unido.org).

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