UNIDO Director General’s address
at the International University of Humanities and Development

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Ashgabat
Turkmenistan

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear students,
I am very honoured to be invited to address you today here at the International University of Humanities and Development. This is my first visit to Turkmenistan and I have been impressed by the meetings and discussions I have held here and by the commitment to sustainable economic development expressed by everyone I have spoken to.
Allow me to thank the University and the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan for giving me the opportunity to talk about UNIDO and its mandate.

UNIDO was established in 1966 as an autonomous body within the United Nations. Its mission is to promote and accelerate the industrialization of developing countries. In recent years, UNIDO has assumed an enhanced role in the global development agenda by focusing its activities on poverty reduction, inclusive globalization and environmental sustainability. As a specialized agency of the United Nations system, UNIDO is dedicated to promoting inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID).
The Organization draws on four mutually reinforcing categories of services:
1. technical cooperation
2. analytical and policy advisory services
3. standard setting and compliance, and
4. a convening function for knowledge transfer, partnership and networking.

UNIDO's vision is a world where economic development is inclusive and sustainable, and economic progress is equitable. All countries should have the opportunity to build their productive capabilities, to increase their trade capacity and to safeguard their environment.
Hence, we focus on three main thematic areas:
- Poverty reduction through productive activities
- Trade capacity-building
- Energy and environment

Inclusive and sustainable industrial development (ISID) means that:
- Every country benefits from the globalization of industry and trade, and achieves a higher level of industrialization in their economies.
- No one is left behind in benefiting from industrial growth, and prosperity is shared among women and men in all countries.
- Inclusive economic and social growth is supported within an environmentally sustainable framework.
- Unique knowledge and resources of all relevant stakeholders are combined to maximize the development impact of ISID.

It is important to recognize that industry is the driver of technological learning, innovation and economic development. Industry is the main engine of economic growth. It increases productivity, stimulates job creation and generates income, thereby providing opportunities for social inclusion, including safe and universal energy access, food security, access to clean water and sustainable agricultural production. Industry is therefore associated with increasing returns and value generation, and has important linkages across all areas of economic and social development.

We have seen it happen in many countries, including China. My country has transformed its economy from one of the poorest on earth to one of the world's largest economies. UNIDO has contributed to this transformation process.

I am proud that UNIDO is a member of the United Nations family in Ashgabat and is contributing to Turkmenistan’s sustainable economic development through our technical assistance projects. Hand-in-hand with other UN agencies and partners, we are committed to fostering technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and building partnerships for delivering high-impact and effective results for the benefit of the people of Turkmenistan.

Inclusive and sustainable industrialization is undoubtedly the most meaningful of responses to the development aspirations facing countries today. It underlines the increasingly crucial catalytic contribution that UNIDO can make, together with other development partners, in reducing poverty, creating sustainable livelihoods and boosting environmentally responsible economic growth. The relevance of UNIDO’s mandate and mission has consequently never been stronger.

One of central tenets of ISID is innovation and entrepreneurship, based on universal education and training. These have the power to build healthy, inclusive societies, and to fight the scourge of poverty. In societies that are increasingly diverse, education can help us live together peacefully and productively by promoting mutual understanding, tolerance and respect for others.

Entrepreneurship matters for inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Entrepreneurship is an inclusive process that enables the bottom billion, women and men, in rural as well as urban areas, to climb up the ladder of prosperity.

By 2020, 600 million jobs will need to be created in order to absorb the world's growing young population and it is imperative to establish an enabling policy environment now, so that children and youth can benefit from investments in education, employment and livelihood creation that will allow them to become productive adults today and in the future.
Education can develop entrepreneurial mind-sets and entrepreneurial capabilities, while institutional changes through public policies can develop interest in entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intentions, increase perceptions of the feasibility of entrepreneurship, and remove institutional barriers to entrepreneurship for young people. It is also a pathway towards living in harmony with our environment. The answers to climate change cannot only be economic or scientific; they lie as well in the realms of attitudes and behaviours, and making informed choices based on education.

There is a widening gap between the competencies needed in the labour market and those acquired through education systems. We must bridge this gap through enhanced training and by harnessing the power of information and communication technologies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
You are the future of your country; tomorrow's drivers of entrepreneurial activity in your communities and regions. UNIDO encourages the development of young people's skills and knowledge for an entrepreneurial society and helps governments develop and improve entrepreneurship curricula and learning initiatives.

I welcome that the Government of Turkmenistan has included education, innovation and research in the development priorities it has set for its strategic development strategy for 2030. This reflects a profound understanding that education holds the keys to future shared prosperity and well-being.

In our knowledge-based economies, education is the single best investment nations can make to build prosperous and equitable societies. Education is at the heart of the global social, political and development agendas. Statistics tell us that education is important because it increases incomes, productivity and well-being. The list of quantifiable benefits is very long.
Turkmenistan is on a promising trajectory. You, its young people are capable and determined. Its younger generations are increasingly making their mark, including in the new government.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization, along with our sister agencies, will be by your side and we will continue to support you on your chosen path.
I thank you for your kind attention and wish you all the best in your studies and future careers.