

Finland's statement at UNIDO's General Conference 18

Agenda item 7

Mister / Madam President,

Thank you for this opportunity to take the floor and share some ideas about the topics of the General Conference.

Since this is the first time I'm taking the floor, let me also congratulate you for your selection of the President of the 18th General Conference. I also wish to congratulate the Vice-Presidents of the General Committee and the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Main Committee, as well as all other distinguished colleagues nominated to serve in General Conference functions for their selection.

Finland commends the United Arab Emirates for hosting the 18th General Conference of UNIDO and congratulates for the successful organization of the Conference.

Finland welcomes the Annual Report of UNIDO. Finland values the work and the results that UNIDO has delivered for the inclusive and sustainable industrial development, and eventually, for benefit of the people in developing countries. We particularly appreciate UNIDO's work in Africa and Least Developed Countries all over the world, not forgetting the fact that poverty and development challenges are equally severe among disadvantaged populations in the Middle Income Countries, as well. The two biggest Finnish-funded UNIDO projects are in South Africa and Namibia, both benefiting marginalized groups.

In accordance with our appreciation of UNIDO, Finland avails itself to continue as a member of the Industrial Development Board as well as the Program and Budget Committee.

Distinguished delegates,

Finland puts a heavy importance on the gender questions. The rights and status of women and girls and gender equality is our key priority. Our Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade has personally highlighted this theme and emphasized especially the importance and role of women entrepreneurs for sustainable development.

Finland wants to congratulate UNIDO for the new Strategy for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women 2020–2023. We are convinced that it is a very important document. It's particularly welcome that the Strategy has a list of Key Performance Indicators at all levels against which UNIDO can track progress. We will be following the implementation of the Strategy with keen interest.

Finland has supported UNIDO's gender activities with both the unutilized balances and IDF resources. In total, we have allocated more than 400,000 euros for UNIDO's gender work, both within the organization and at the country level, during the last two years. Furthermore, Finland will fund a JPO who will be working on partnerships and gender.

In this respect, Finland would like to encourage the Director General to continue his able leadership and even intensify efforts to ensure gender parity among the staff, especially the top positions. We believe that equality and diversity within an organization increase creativity and innovation and thereby strengthen the potential for future success.

As one more example of Finland's strong commitment to the rights of women and gender equality, Finland and UNIDO (***depending on the timing of the statement:***)

- will organize a side event on the launch of the UNIDO Gender Strategy and the Future of Inclusive Industry, tomorrow / today at 11.30.
- organized today / yesterday / on Monday, a side event on the launch of the UNIDO Gender Strategy and the Future of Inclusive Industry.

Finland stands ready to continue cooperation with UNIDO for women's empowerment in multiple fronts, also in the future.

Mister / Madam Chair,

Finland welcomes the report by the Director General on UNIDO activities related to energy and the environment.

The humankind has, this year, become aware of the climate change more than ever. If our production and consumption patterns don't change in a significantly more sustainable direction, the humankind will face huge challenges in the future. Some of them we may not even be able to resolve.

Finland prepared an ambitious government program five months ago. Our target is to be carbon neutral by 2035. After that, Finland aims to be carbon negative. It will require investments into renewable energy; energy and material efficiency; recycling; research, technology and innovation; and circular economy, to name a few.

UNIDO is a pioneer in these areas. Our priorities are well aligned here, as well. UNIDO's work in circular economy, renewable energy and climate change, for example, is extremely important for us. I am convinced that all countries and people will gain enormously over a longer period when they make efforts to turn their own societies onto a low-carbon path.

Chair,

I also want to congratulate all of us for being able to find consensus on the budget of UNIDO and scale of assessments of Member States for 2020–2021. I wish that, when we look back in 2022 how UNIDO used those resources, we could proudly say that UNIDO has worked efficiently and made a change.

Closely related to the budgetary issue is UNIDO's role in and contribution to the UN Resident Coordinator System. In Finland's opinion, all UN organizations are expected to contribute fully to the Resident Coordinator system. At the same time, we hope that UNIDO can take maximum benefit of the UN Development System Reform and the RC System. UNIDO plays a very important role in the UN System, being the only agency that specifically advances inclusive and sustainable industrial development and, hence, strongly contributes towards SDG 9 on industry, infrastructure and innovation. UNIDO has, therefore, a lot to offer to the work of the UN family.

I thank everybody for attention.