

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
NAMIBIA, H.E. NADA KRUGER AT THE 18<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF UNIDO'S GENERAL  
CONFERENCE FROM 3<sup>rd</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 AT ABU DHABI, UNITED ARAB  
EMIRATES**

**Mr President,**

I congratulate you, on behalf of the African Group on your election as President of this 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference. The Group would like to assure you of its support as you steer the conference to a successful conclusion. Further appreciation is extended to the United Arab Emirates for generously hosting the Conference and gratitude is expressed to the Secretariat for the excellent arrangements in preparing for this Session.

**Mr President,**

The Group aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

**Mr President,**

The African Group expresses its appreciation to the Director-General, Mr Li Yong for his opening address in which he highlights the key activities undertaken by UNIDO in the last few years. The Group is further appreciative that under DG Li Yong, UNIDO continues to give priority to the African Development Agenda. Despite steady progress recorded in social and economic development on the continent in recent decades, a challenge of underdevelopment remains acute, especially considering that 34 of the 48 Least Developed Countries are located in Africa. Unemployment, inequality and poverty remain stubbornly high. The African Continent is ready to play its part as expressed through the developmental framework for the continent's Agenda 2063.

In this regard, the Group welcomes the outcome of the recently concluded 8<sup>th</sup> Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference and commends UNIDO for its continued role in integrating the Istanbul Plan of Action (IPOA) in its programmes and activities.

**Mr President,**

The theme of the current session namely "Industry 2030 - Innovate, connect, transform our future" provides member states with an opportunity to critically discuss issues regarding the role of new technologies to promote the advancement of industrial enterprises, enhance productivity and speed up Industrial development.

The African Group believes that the introduction of the Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) launched by UNIDO in 2014 is an innovative programme delivery vehicle through which UNIDO can effectively support its members to implement their industrial development strategies. The Group particularly welcomes the fact that there are a number of African countries that are part of the programme, namely, Ethiopia, Senegal, Egypt, Morocco, Cote D'Ivoire, Rwanda and Zambia.

The Group looks forward to comprehensive assessments of the impact of the PCP, with a view to share lessons learnt and best practices with other countries, both in the region and beyond, with a possible expansion of the program for the countries that may wish to join.

The African Group wishes to underscore that the success of the PCP and many other programmes and projects of the Continent depends on our ability to mobilise the required resources. It is for this reason that the African Group welcomes the continued contribution of some member states and international donors towards the implementation of the PCP and its expansion.

**Mr President,**

The Group appreciates the steps taken by the UNIDO with respect to the implementation of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III) in particular development of the Roadmap with concrete programmatic activities and time-frame, in conjunction with the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa, Food and Agricultural Organization and Africa Development Bank, among others. We believe the appointment of the IDDA III Champions will add impetus to the efforts of the Organization in creating awareness, mobilizing financial resources and fostering partnerships towards accelerating the implementation of IDDA III.

In this regard, the Group welcomes the initiative of the IDDA III Championship with the Heads of states of Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Malta, Niger, Senegal, South Africa and Zambia in creating awareness and fostering partnerships towards accelerating the implementation of IDDA III.

**Mr President,**

The Group welcomes UNIDO's participation in the process of the signing of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA), the world's largest Free Trade Area, with a combined GDP of U\$ 2.6 Trillion and a vibrant population of 1.6 billion people. The agreement is aimed at fostering intra-African trade, through the free movement of goods and services within the Continent. With a multiple development programmes, the continent is inviting investors to make use of this opportunity presented by the Free Trade Area, to invest and contribute to the development of the people of Africa.

**Mr President,**

The African Group supports the adoption of the Programme and Budgets for the biennium 2020-2021, as recommended by the Industrial Development Board. The Group acknowledges that the proposed budget is created in order to fulfil the mandate of the Organisation within the broader development context of the on-going United Nations Development System. In this regard, the Group urges the Director-General to continue engaging in respect to the cost-sharing for the reform in order to ensure that UNIDO's contribution will not hamper technical cooperation, field offices and its operations and staff in the Headquarters. In view of the current financial situation, the Group is concerned with the large amount of arrears owed by current and former Member States of the organization and urges the Secretariat to continue approaching the concerned states to settle the outstanding amounts.

**Mr President,**

In conclusion, the Group takes note of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and further supports UNIDO's technical cooperation activities in this regard. It is recognised that Africa is one of the most vulnerable continents to climate changes because of the range of projected impacts, multiple stresses and

low adaptive capacity. Such vulnerability impedes on the continent's industrial development prospects. In this regard, the African Group wishes to call on UNIDO to intensify its collaborative efforts and also call on donors, private/public and other UN specialized Agencies to pay special attention to the plights of the African continent to enable Africa leap-frog its current delayed state of industrial development in order to properly align with the UN sustainable development goals.

I thank you.