

- as delivered -

Statement by
H.E. Ms. Morakot Sriswasdi
Permanent Representative of Thailand to UNIDO
Head of the Delegation of Thailand
at the 5th Plenary Meeting of the 18th Session of UNIDO General Conference
5th November 2019, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Madame President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. I wish to join other delegations to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Suhail Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Industry of the United Arab Emirates, upon his assumption to the post of the President of the eighteenth session of the General Conference. My congratulations also go to yourself, Madae President, and all members of the General Committee. I also wish to thank the Government of the United Arab Emirates for the excellent arrangement and warm hospitality extended to my delegation. My delegation also thanks the Director General and all members of the secretariat for their hard works in preparing the Conference.

2. My delegation fully associates ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the statement by the distinguished delegate of China on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group. I will add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Madame President,

3. Thailand reaffirms our full support and strong commitment to UNIDO in the execution of its mandate on inclusive and sustainable industrial development. With such mandate, the Organization, as part of the United Nations Development System, has become more relevant than ever, with its scope of activities now encompasses several socio-economic aspects vital to Member States, in particular least-developed and middle-income countries.

4. UNIDO has succeed in demonstrating its mission to be in line with many of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, not only Goal 9 on Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, but also other important goals on poverty, energy, work and economic growth, sustainable cities, and climate action. My delegation wishes to register our appreciation to the Director General, Mr. Li Yong, in this regard.

5. In this connection, Thailand welcomes the adoption of the Abu Dhabi Declaration, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Chairperson of the Main Committee, the secretariat, and the flexibility of Member States. The Declaration will serve as the framework for UNIDO's action to work towards the achievement of the SDGs.

6. It should be noted that, with higher demand for the Organization's service to Member States, sufficient financial resources are essential in ensuring that the Organization's supply of personnel capacity and expertise can match the former. Thailand therefore call on fellow Member States to pay their contribution to UNIDO in full and on time to show our ownership and commitment to the Organization.

Madame President,

7. Sustainable Development in industrial and economic sector is high on the list of the Thai Government's priorities. Specific benchmarks and guidelines have been set out to ensure consistent implementation of the long-term strategy which is designed to be carried out through the public-private-people partnership.

8. In view of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, also known as Industry 4.0, the Thai Government has initiated the Thailand 4.0 economic development model. Such model focuses on the promotion of science, technology and innovation, together with human resource development and economic reform with a view to develop technology-intensive production cluster, bio-economy, digital economy at both national and local level, while the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) remains being upheld as overarching principle for our economic and industrial policy.

Madame President,

9. On the cooperation between Thailand and UNIDO, since the seventeenth session of the General Conference in 2017 which saw the signing of the Thailand – UNIDO Strategic Cooperation Framework (SCF) for 2018 – 2021, we have been working closely with the Organization in a number of activities. Highlight of these activities obviously being the 5th Green Industry Conference organized in Bangkok in October last year attended by over 500 participants from 51 countries. The Conference coincided with the 50th Anniversary of our membership in UNIDO and we were delighted to welcome the Director General to Thailand on that occasion.

10. Apart from the ongoing technical cooperation projects implemented in Thailand with the involvement of UNIDO experts, a capacity-building training and two workshops were organized in Thailand by UNIDO. In July this year, UNIDO also soft-launched the new Industrial Analytics Platform during the Thailand Industry Expo 2019. We look forward to expanding the scope of these activities into that of triangular cooperation with the involvement of beneficiaries from countries in our region.

11. I should also mention the status of the Thailand-UNIDO cooperation with regard to the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC) which is the Thai Government's initiative to create a special economic zone in Eastern Thailand, aiming at boosting economic growth for the country.

12. Building upon the Joint Declaration between UNIDO and Thailand's Eastern Economic Corridor Office (EECO) signed in 2017, UNIDO and the EECO are now in advanced stage of conceptualizing a project proposal with an objective to accelerate implementation of circular economy model in the development of manufacturing and transportation sector in this special economic zone. In addition, UNIDO and the EEC office will be co-designing with the Thai Ministry of Industry and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment another project to tackle household electronic wastes in the said zone.

13. During Thailand's Chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN, in 2019, we are pleased to see UNIDO experts participated in the Symposium on ASEAN Human Empowerment and Development and the Symposium on ASEAN Industrial Transformation to Industry 4.0 organized in Thailand. On the margin of the thirty-fifth ASEAN Summit and Related Summits currently held in Bangkok, UNIDO together with Thailand's Eastern Economic Corridor Office , EECO, and Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization (TGO) co-organized a seminar on circular economy, waste management and sustainability on 1 November 2019.

14. Thailand sees the engagement of UNIDO in regional cooperation frameworks, including ASEAN, as a welcoming sign of the Organization's pro-active approach in service of Member States. We stand ready to support greater level of engagement and growing contribution of UNIDO to ASEAN members in the coming years.

Madame President,

15. Having been working closely with the UNIDO in recent years, Thailand is of the view that Field Offices and Regional Hubs of UNIDO in Thailand and, perhaps, worldwide, are still underutilized in the development and implementation of UNIDO projects and activities in Member States.

16. We believe the Field Offices should be given higher responsibility in engaging with Member States to co-design and co-implement the projects together, given their experiences and insights gained from being located in each specific location. The Field Offices should also be encouraged to actively explore collaboration and partnership with international donors and financial institutions so that new sources of funding for UNIDO's projects and activities could be further secured.

Madame President,

17. I would like to conclude by restating Thailand's commitment to work closely with UNIDO as our important life-long partner for inclusive and sustainable industrial development both in our country and beyond.

I thank you for your attention.