

**NATIONAL STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED ON THE 18TH SESSION
OF GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (UNIDO) SHCEDULED TO HOLD
FROM 3RD – 7TH NOVEMBER 2019 IN ABU DHABI, UAE**

Mr. President, H.E. Eng. Suhail Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Industry (UAE)

Your Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, I wish to congratulate you and other members of the bureau on your election which is an indication of the confidence reposed on you to effectively steer this conference to a successful conclusion.

2. I wish to also thank the outgoing President of the 17th Session of the General Conference, Her Excellency Ambassador Alena Kupchyna, Permanent Representative of Belarus and the members of the bureau for their Commitment and brilliant performance during their term.

3. Nigeria would like to use this opportunity to join other member states to welcome the Republic of Azerbaijan, the newest member of the organization who became a member with effect from the 27th September 2019. We also welcome the participation of the State of Palestine for the first time, in this General Conference as a Member State.

Mr. President,

4. Nigeria aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador Omar Amer Youssef, Permanent Representative of Egypt and Chairman of Group of 77 and China, Vienna chapter, and statement delivered by Her

Excellency Ambassador Nada Kruger, Permanent Representative of Namibia and the Chair of the African Group. In our national capacity, I would like to make the following remarks.

5. I would like to commend the purposeful leadership of the Director General of UNIDO, Mr. Li Yong in promoting Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID) and the Agenda 2030, and his efforts towards repositioning the organization as a strategic partner of member states and a respectable player within the United Nations system. I strongly believe that the Organization is reaping from the opportunity of your second term in benefiting from your inestimable skills, ideas and experience. I wish to also extend my warm appreciations to the secretariat for their work in preparing for this conference.

6. Nigeria is conscious of its rapid population growth which now stands at about 180 million. We have a youthful, energetic and hardworking population hence the need, more than ever before to grow our economy and generate employment for our teeming youths. The main focus of the current government is to lift 100 Million Nigerians out of poverty by 2025 as it continues to strive for an inclusive economic growth that would ensure job creation.

7. Mr. President, Distinguished delegates, taking into account the critical role industrialization plays in economic growth and development as well as the correlating need for energy, my country has developed a comprehensive master plan to address the energy deficit and achieve energy sufficiency and security. In this regard, the government is fast tracking a nationwide approach in our power reforms with effective strategies that will ensure improved generation and distribution of

electricity in the country. This has resulted in progress recorded in various sources of energy including hydro, solar and in the future nuclear power respectively, while taking into account, our commitments to environmental protection.

8. In order to attract investment and to further develop the productive sectors of the economy, my government has reviewed the Trade, Industrial and Investment policies under the Presidential Committee on ease of doing business, mandated to ensure an enabling environment that would attract Foreign Direct Investment and also encourage local and private sector involvement to boost economic development and growth.

9. Similarly, my government is determined to diversify the economy from oil resulting in the launch of the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP) in 2017, aimed at putting Nigeria on a path of sustained, inclusive and self sufficient nation. My government in collaboration with UNIDO, the Nigerian Agribusiness and Agro-Industrial Development Initiative (NAADI) has also established six Integrated Agro-industrial parks while the Single Crop Processing Zones (SCPZs) is in process.

Mr. President,

10. Agriculture remains one of the highest priorities of my government, with the recent launch of the initiative called "Green Alternative" which sets out clear agricultural action plan and policy measures to achieve self-sufficiency in the production of rice, cassava, maize, sorghum, yam and other staple foods. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture is working with relevant agencies on value chain development for selected agricultural commodities in areas of production, marketing and processing.

11. We believe that Nigeria's emphasis on Agro-industries and Agribusiness as a strategic diversification policy is replicated in most developing countries. Africa cannot overcome poverty, youth unemployment and other challenges without industrialization. It is in this regard that UNIDO's mandate and activities are key and important to the industrialization process, as it requires a multi-stakeholders approach involving regional, sub-regional organizations, the international community, the private sector, international financial institutions and donor agencies.

12. It is with the above mind that Nigeria recognizes the efforts of the Director General in steering the Organization's activities aimed at promoting the IDDA III as the lead Organization for the implementation and Operationalization, in building partnerships with development agencies and other Inter-Governmental Agencies, development funds in its implementation. We also appreciate the various initiatives undertaken by the secretariat, particularly the development of a road-map for its implementation and the launching of the IDDA III Champions comprising of 8 African Heads of State and Malta which now serves as a high level platform for the promotion of African industrialization.

13. I would like to further stress the need for UNIDO's continued support to Member States in the field of trade capacity building and job creation, agribusiness, particularly in middle income countries and Least Developed countries. We welcome UNIDO's efforts in the area of energy and environment in supporting Member States to increase their productivity while equally maximizing the use of resources which could lead to an increase in output and resilience.

14. Mr. President, Nigeria welcomes the expansion of UNIDO's Programme for Country's Partnership (PCP) model and wishes to further reiterate its desire to upgrade Nigeria's current Country Programme to the status of PCP, focusing on selected sectors in the country for optimal result. In this regard, Nigeria solicits the continued support of the organization, regional and international financial institutions, United Nations and donor countries, to encourage the expansion process of the PCP model because it is an effective means for up-scaling and creating synergies, a veritable instrument that elicits high level commitments from member States and also brings visibility to the work of UNIDO globally.

15. Finally Mr. President, we thank UNIDO for its technical support and effective partnership with Nigeria, particularly in the area of Scaling up of Small Hydro Power and the Renewable Energy (Biomass sources). Nigeria reiterates its support to UNIDO in ensuring that its mandate of promoting and accelerating industrial development to enable Africa leapfrog its industrial development and achieve its goal of inclusive and sustainable industrial developments is achieved and sustained.

16. Thank you.