

## **DRAFT PHILIPPINE STATEMENT**

### **18<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE UNIDO GENERAL CONFERENCE**

**3-7 November 2019, Abu Dhabi, UAE**

**MR. PRESIDENT,**

**On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of the Philippines, I wish to congratulate you on your election as President of the 18<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNIDO General Conference. Allow me also to express our sincere appreciation to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for the excellent hosting of this General Conference here in Abu Dhabi. I congratulate, as well, all the members of the Bureau on their election to the General and Main Committees, the Chair and Bureau of the 35<sup>th</sup> Programme and Budget Committee, and the President and Bureau of the 47<sup>th</sup> Industrial Development Board for their invaluable work. I express our appreciation to the outgoing President, Ambassador Alena KUPCHYNA of Belarus on her excellent work from the 17<sup>th</sup> Session in 2017, and the Resumed and Special Sessions in 2018.**

**Mr. President, we wish to add our voice in expressing confidence in your able leadership, which will undoubtedly steer these proceedings smoothly and efficiently over the next days. Our delegation further assures you and your bureau of our support in achieving a fruitful outcome of this Conference.**

**Mr. President, my delegation welcomes the State of Palestine to the List A in Annex 1 of Member States, and the newest members of UNIDO, namely, Antigua and Barbuda and the Federated States of Micronesia.**

**The Philippines aligns itself with the Statement of the Group of 77 and China, as delivered by the Ambassador of Egypt, as well as the Statement of the Asia and Pacific Group.**

**In thanking Director General Li Yong for his remarks during the opening of the Session, he clearly outlined to us Member States both the achievements of UNIDO and the challenges that lay ahead for the Organization.**

**As it is well known, challenges have always been a part of life. However, it is not the nature of the various challenges we face that matters, but how we respond to them. This has never been more true than now, especially in the context of sustainable development.**

**Confronted with the paradox that while some parts of the world inexorably march towards prosperity, other parts continue to languish in poverty, and the clarion call is for us to come and work together in the true spirit of multilateralism.**

**Towards this end, the delivery of the mandate of UNIDO on Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development should be**

**paramount in our engagements. Our goal is to harness collective experience, skills, and expertise as best practices, and technology transfer as capacity-building mechanisms, to be shared with those that need them the most. It is our strong belief that knowledge is, and has always been, a bounty meant to be shared with the world, and that meaningful progress can only be achieved if everyone partakes of this bounty. It is a two-way street that creates synergies that benefit both the recipient and sharer alike.**

**We therefore call on Member States to continue supporting UNIDO's Technical Cooperation projects and build upon partnership initiatives such as the Country Programme and Programme for Country Partnership, to ensure that no one is truly left behind.**

**Mr. President, as we forge ahead with industrialization, employing new technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, the Internet-of-Things and Big Data, and concepts such as Circular Economy under the ambit of Industry 4.0 (or the Fourth Industrial Revolution), let us not forget or turn a blind eye from the impact we are making on the environment.**

**As climate change greatly affects resources such as agriculture, water, energy, coastal ecosystems, infrastructure, and human**

**health, it is crucial for UNIDO to support the development of climate resilient strategies.**

**Along these lines, we would like to underscore our gratitude and strong support for UNIDO's activities in the Philippines, where 80% of its projects since 2011 have focused on safeguarding the environment.**

**We call on UNIDO to continuously build the capacity to mobilize climate investments through traditional donors, the private sector, as well as through the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme of the Green Climate Fund.**

**Mr. President, we note that in order for UNIDO to adequately perform its mandate, it must stand on solid ground, particularly in terms of financial viability. As was made clear during this year's PBC and IDB sessions, the judicious use of the Organization's limited budget is a major consideration, especially against the backdrop of increased contribution to the UN Development System Reform and the UN Resident Coordinator System.**

**Thus, we call upon UNIDO to continue working with its external audit partners and internal audit mechanisms, along with Member States to ensure that its budget is utilized thoughtfully and prudently. As the Organization's External Auditor for the current biennium, the Philippines is always ready to share our**

**competencies with UNIDO towards the goal of strong fiscal responsibility and internal controls.**

**Mr. President, in our deliberations on industrial development, we must always take into account the human dimension, notably women empowerment. Based on the Philippine experience, we wish to highlight the positive effects on national development when women are given opportunities to play meaningful roles in both the public and private sectors. Our delegation firmly believes that closing the gender gap, through the thoughtful and conscientious implementation of gender-balanced strategies, can lead to a more resilient, responsive, and future-oriented UNIDO.**

**As our delegation affirms the importance of gender equality and the empowerment of women, we welcome the Director General's Bulletin on UNIDO's updated Policy and the new UNIDO Strategy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and encourage progressing further these initiatives.**

**In closing, Mr. President, as one of UNIDO's founding members who gave the Organization its very first Director General in the person of the former Secretary of Foreign Affairs Domingo L. Siazon, Jr., the Philippines wishes to take this opportunity to reaffirm its close collaboration and continued support to UNIDO. The Philippines will always be ready to contribute in whatever way we can, in cooperation with the Secretariat and our fellow Member**

**States, to ensure the steady and onward march of a relevant and reliable UNIDO.**

**Thank you, Mr. President.**