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UNIDO launches first Goodwill Ambassador Programme

Vienna, Austria, 14 October 2004 – Carlos Magariños, Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) inaugurated today the first Goodwill Ambassador Programme of the UN agency. The purpose of the programme is to improve the organization's visibility, profile and global reach, both with governments and business circles.

Five outstanding public figures, eminent businessmen and industrialists from various regions of the world were selected for this function, to collaborate in the implementation of UNIDO's activities, for a given period of time. The Goodwill Ambassadors will champion the core theme of UNIDO – the role of manufacturing and sustainable industrial development in the overall development process. They will also have an advisory role.

At today's ceremony, held at UNIDO headquarters in Vienna, Sir Ronald Grierson and Mamadou Mansour Cama, accepted the honorary function.

A renowned British banker and industrialist, Sir Ronald Grierson was Director of S.G. Warburg between 1948 and 1985 and Vice-Chairman of the General Electric Company between 1968 and 1996. He also held senior management positions in the UK Government (Deputy Chairman and Managing Director of the UK Industrial Reorganization Corporation) and the European Commission (Director-General for Industry and Technology). Sir Ronald also served on the boards of many international companies, such as Chrysler Corporation, R. J. Reynolds Nabisco, W. R. Grace & Co., British Aircraft Corporation (now BAE Systems) and International Computers Ltd. Currently he is on various advisory boards in Europe and the USA and is chairman of several international philanthropic bodies.

A leading Senegalese businessman, Mamadou Cama has extensive experience in manufacturing, mining, real estate and water distribution. He is Chairman and CEO of the Senegalese Investment Holding Company. The company oversees business in fishing industries, leather processing, shoe manufacturing and water distribution, and controls market shares in real estate. As partner of Boygues Group, it holds shares in the water distribution company Senegalaise des Eaux, which is a nation-wide water supplier. The Senegalese Investment Company also operates in the mining sector. Mamadou Cama is also a founding member of Senegal's National Confederation of Employers and has been its Chairman since 1993. He is an advocate of widening international trade agreements with African countries for a sustainable social and economic development. He believes that the best way to combat poverty is through private sector promotion, job creation and income generation.

The Goodwill Ambassadors with their extensive background and rich experience in private sector business development, industry and trade, will support UNIDO activities in two areas.

One is the UNIDO-UNDP joint private sector development programme for which an agreement was signed between the two organizations on 23 September 2004. This represents a pioneering response to the recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Private Sector and Development (2004), which focus on

‘unleashing entrepreneurship’ and ‘making business work for the poor’ in developing countries.

The other area relates to trade capacity-building, for which a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between UNIDO and the World Trade Organization (WTO) on 10 September 2003. Joint UNIDO-WTO activities have been initiated since then, focusing on the removal of supply-side constraints, capacity-building in the areas of standardization and quality control, providing conformity with technical market entry requirements and addressing issues dealing with integration into the multilateral trade system.

A second ceremony will take place on 5 November 2004 appointing three further personalities as UNIDO Goodwill Ambassadors.

Note for editors

The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that focuses its efforts on relieving poverty by fostering productivity growth. It helps developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their fight against marginalization in today's globalized world. It mobilizes knowledge, skills, information and technology to promote productive employment, a competitive economy and a sound environment. UNIDO has 171 member states. For more information, please visit www.unido.org.

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