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STATEMENT BY MALAWI'S DEPUTY MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE, HON. STEVIN KAMWENDO, M.P. AT THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION (UNIDO) GENERAL CONFERENCE, HELD IN VIENNA, AUSTRIA, FROM 7TH TO 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2009.

Mr President

Director General

Ladies and gentlemen

*Join my colleagues who have spoken before on behalf of my delegation to*

Let me at the outset take this opportunity to congratulate you, **Mr President**, on your election as **President** of this Thirteenth Session of the General Conference. I am convinced that you will successfully preside over the affairs of this august assembly. Let me also commend **Mr Kandeh Yumkella** on his re-election as **Director General** of **UNIDO**. We look forward to another successful four years ahead.

Mr President, the theme for this year focusing on "green industry" would not have come at a better time when issues of climate change are affecting industrial development in our countries through erratic weather patterns that have an affect agro-industries.

*Financial Crisis.*

**The discussions on the effects of the are also timely.** The financial crisis has to a large extent resulted in the reduction of export volumes for some countries, including Malawi. Some of our major exports have been affected by the crisis and we believe that this is a wake up call for us to reduce our reliance on the export of raw materials but focus on exporting value added products. The role of UNIDO in this process cannot, therefore, be overemphasized. UNIDO's expertise in the fields of industrial productivity, technological innovation, investment promotion, trade capacity building, private sector development, among others, is unparalleled and remains a vital asset for LDCs in their quest to industrialise and participate in the global economy. Malawi, therefore, looks forward to UNIDO to assist in building the necessary capacities with a view to encouraging economic and structural transformation in our country.

*Mr. President,*

My Government, which was ushered into power for the second term in May this year has since June declared Industrial Development as one of the government's top priority areas along with Agriculture and Food Security, Transport, Energy and Mining, and Rural Development. The key focus in this regard is value addition and beneficiation which, we believe, if well implemented could fulfill the government's development agenda of transforming the country from a predominantly importing and consuming nation to a predominantly producing and exporting nation. We realise that in order to fulfill this mandate we will need support from development partners such as UNIDO which is well positioned to assist countries such as ours.

**Mr President,** we believe that in our quest to develop the country the private sector should play a central role. In this regard, we have as country

been carrying out private sector reforms aimed at improving the climate for private sector operations. Some of these reforms include the establishment of a Commercial Division of the High Court to facilitate resolution of commercial disputes, as well as the review of over 40 business related laws which are no longer in tandem with modern business transactions. We are also encouraging the establishment of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and encourage dialogue between government and the private sector. My government is, therefore, doing all it can to improve the productive capacity of the country but still requires some external support in many areas such as **agro- industries and** standardization for example to enable us produce competitive goods. We would, therefore, welcome UNIDO support in these areas especially in benchmarking with the best practices. This is because we believe that one of the best means of getting out of the crisis is to produce and export more and good quality products.

One of the major factors inhibiting industrial development is lack of capacity at technical and institutional level. Malawi, therefore, wishes to utilize UNIDO's competencies in the areas of productivity improvement, standardisation, investment and technology promotion as well as institutional capacity building. I am aware that a UNIDO mission visited my country recently and that through that visit we were able to outline some of our major requirements. It is my hope that more detailed follow up activities will be done soon.

**Mr President,** I am also aware that at regional level under the Southern African Development Community SADC efforts are underway to come up with an Industrial Upgrading and Modernisation Programme which will also

go a long way towards enhancing the productive capacity of countries in the region and hence enable them avert further damage from the crisis.

**Mr President**, let me state that successful implementation of all these programmes will require that UNIDO should have adequate financial resources. Let me, therefore, take this opportunity to appeal to our development partners to assist UNIDO with resources that will enable it contribute towards improving the productive capacity of countries such as mine.

Finally, let me once again, thank UNIDO for organizing such a successful conference.

Thank You very much.