

UPDATE

Sri Lanka Statement

**H.E. Mr. Musthafa M. Jaffeer, Ambassador & Permanent Representative
13th Session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial
Development Organization (UNIDO)
Vienna: 8th December 2009**

Mr. President,
Distinguished Heads of States and Governments,
Honourable Ministers,
Director General,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to congratulate you, Excellency Ambassador Ali Asgar Soltanieh, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on your election as the President of Thirteenth Session of the UNIDO General Conference.

I would also like to extend our appreciation to Ambassador Omar Zniber, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco for successfully conducting the work of 12th Session of the General Conference.

Mr. President,
Sri Lanka attaches great importance to the mandate and goal of UNIDO to promote and accelerate sustainable industrial development and international cooperation to improve the living conditions of our people.

Today, UNIDO is acknowledged as a highly vital and specialized organisation that can support countries in addressing the interlinked challenges of environmental sustainability in industry and access to efficient energy.

Mr. President,

Dr Yumkella in his first term of office, has led UNIDO with dedication and vision and I would like to extend Sri Lanka's heartiest congratulations to him on his re-appointment as the Director-General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization for a second term.

My delegation has listened closely to the remarks and overview of Director General of UNIDO on the work achieved in the last four years and the challenges and priorities that lay ahead for the next four years and beyond.

My delegation commends the efforts of the Director-General and his staff on the well-presented and comprehensive Annual Report. We are pleased to note the high levels of funds mobilization and utilization in the thematic areas in 2007 and 2008. The increased level of funding paves the way for UNIDO to enhance its technical cooperation delivery in these areas.

My delegation is hopeful that the administrative measures such as Results Based Assessment, MTPF, IPSAS and consultative mechanisms introduced in UNIDO will enhance the efficiency of the Organisation. We also note that UNIDO under UN Delivering as One initiative has developed tools such as CEB Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity Building along with other UN agencies. Such initiatives through combined UN agencies and organs could ensure better, efficient, delivery of projects.

Mr. President,

The global efforts to eradicate poverty envisioned in the Millennium Development Goal face new sets of challenges, due to the accelerated globalization in recent decades, the global financial crisis, the adverse consequences of climate change, and food and energy security. These issues are complex and inter-twined, and require a holistic, concerted and collective approach. We recognize the role that UNIDO could play in facing these challenges.

UNIDO, through its vital thematic and sub thematic measures and intervention, serves as a bridge to cross the poverty line for developing countries.

Trade facilitation measures taken by UNIDO through Trade Capacity building based on competitive supply capacity and adequate quality infrastructure provided for LDC and middle income countries, though not exhaustive provide a vital value addition to tradable goods.

UNIDO's assumes a significant role in assisting developing countries to achieve environmentally sustainable development and focus on improving the efficient use of resources in industry. My delegation welcomes UNIDO's timely initiative to organize the Forum on Industrial Development Issues and Round Tables, that provides vital platforms for constructive discussions on the challenges facing us today in greening industries. The theme assumes even greater significance in directing UNIDO's course as world leaders are currently deliberating in Copenhagen at the "Climate Conference" on one of the greatest challenges facing us today.

Mr. President,

Under the cross cutting programmes, UNIDO's promotion of the South-South Industrial cooperation programme should be fully utilized on transfer of technology and in other potential areas. We see great possibilities for greater regional and sub-regional cooperation that could bring synergies and greater integration in industries.

Mr. President,

Sri Lanka's industrial and development needs have great convergence with UNIDO's work and programmes. Long before the MDGs were articulated globally, Sri Lanka was well on track to reach the related targets in several areas, including gender equality and universal primary enrolment. Sri Lanka has some time ago reached the status of middle income country and has been able to manage an average growth rates above 6 percent, despite having to deal with challenges of the 2004 Tsunami and the threat of terrorism.

Significant developments have taken place in Sri Lanka, since the last General Conference. Today there is renewed hope and optimism for my country, after almost three decades of conflict inflicted on us by a terrorist group, Sri Lanka was able to defeat terrorism in May of this year and the Government has accelerated development and rehabilitation of affected areas. Donors, international organizations and financial institutions are expressing their confidence in our reconstruction and development plans and engaging and making important contributions

Many challenges that affect our economic development are being addressed under the "Mahinda Chintanaya" – the economic policy framework of the Government.

In our stride towards industrial development, we have encountered obstacles and bottlenecks similar to the problems faced by other developing countries with regard to investment, access to technology, market, energy and other issues.

Further as a developing island State, Sri Lanka is highly vulnerable to the adverse impact of Climate Change, and high cost of fossil fuels. We must find solutions to the energy crisis that are both equitable and pragmatic. Energy supplies must be diversified by developing advanced, cleaner, more efficient and cost-effective technologies, for both fossil fuels and renewable energy sources. With 40% of power from Hydro sources and 60% from thermal sources, the Government is focusing on expanding our renewable sources of energy.

Mr. President,

The effects of the global food crisis still lingers and has the potential to assume even more dangerous proportions, if we fail to take urgent and collective action. Ensuring food and nutrition security has emerged as one of Sri Lanka's priority requirements. Under the Government's new concept of "Let's grow Food and Develop the Country" – Sri Lanka has even been able to withstand the severe impact of the recent food crisis. Achieving food security would require strengthening and revitalizing the agriculture sector. This calls for the empowerment of small and medium scale farmers through a series of measures

UNIDO's Human Security coordination is of special interest to Sri Lanka. A period of conflict coupled with the destruction of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami had a severe impact on the Socio-economic development of Sri Lanka and adversely affected our industrial and agricultural infrastructures, especially in the North-Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka.

The Government has an extensive strategy for the development of the Eastern and Northern Provinces and re-integrate them into the country's national development by setting immediate, short, medium and long term targets.

Together with on-going assistance for resettlement, reconstruction and rehabilitation, there is an urgent need to increase agricultural productivity and improve food security. Moreover, the revitalization of small businesses in rural areas is crucial for improving market opportunities for locally produced agro-based products and increasing the economic stability of the productive sectors. The Government also has a special focus on assisting and empowering women who have become widows due to the conflict and tsunami.

The Government works closely with the private sectors, business community and local NGOs in these programmes and looks forward to increased cooperation from development partners.

Mr. President,

Effective and sustainable industrial development remains an important aspect of the overall development strategy of Sri Lanka. Work is ongoing to finalize the UNIDO Country Programme (CP) for Sri Lanka for 2010-2014 and will focus on the objective "To promote inclusive growth through enhancement of productive activities and introduction of environment-friendly technology." The programme will consist of two components. The first component will focus on supporting sustainable livelihoods and productive activities through private sector development. The second component aims at increasing the competitiveness of industries and reducing poverty through the introduction of environment-friendly technologies.

Mr. President,

The innovative Cleaner Production (CP) programme of UNIDO remains a successful example of Sri Lanka's partnership with UNIDO, where the National Cleaner Production Centre (NCPC) in Sri Lanka has been able to actively raise awareness and share best practices to many industries. The Centre organizes forums to bring in stakeholders and industry and serves as the national focal point to provide guidance on sustainable consumption and production practices leading to sustainable development. A number of sectors in Sri Lanka implement CP solutions in their enterprises such as Hotel and Catering, Metal, Fiber, Food, Tea, Chemicals, Textiles and Printing.

Mr. President,

I am pleased to inform you that Sri Lanka has been privileged to have been selected to host the 9th *Asia Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable*

Consumption and Production Conference next year. The conference will be hosted by the Ministry of Industrial Development, and implemented through the National Cleaner production Centre, in its Ministry.

The challenges before us are manifold, and we are confident that UNIDO programmes will help us in facing these challenges through collective efforts and cooperation.

Thank you.