

ZIMBABWE



**ADDRESS BY HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, M. BIMHA AT THE 13TH
SESSION OF THE UNIDO GENERAL CONFERENCE: VIENNA,
AUSTRIA; 07 DECEMBER 2009**

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Mr. President,

Honourable Ministers here present,

The Director General of UNIDO, Dr Kandeh Yumukela,

Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished delegates,

At the onset, on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Zimbabwe, I extend our congratulations to you, Mr President on your election as President of the 13th Session of the UNIDO General Conference.

I also congratulate members of the Bureau on their election. I assure you of my delegation's full support.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made by the Group of 77 as well as the African Group.

My delegation also extends sincere congratulations to Dr. Kandeh Yumukella on his re-appointment as Director General of UNIDO. Zimbabwe commends the Director General for his outstanding stewardship of the

organisation during the last four years. We note that during the next four years, Dr Yumkella will build on this success and guide UNIDO within the context of its core mandate, to assist Member States rise up to the numerous challenges attendant with the current global economic slowdown as well as the global climate change. I wish to assure you Mr. Director General, of Zimbabwe's full support and cooperation during your tenure.

Mr President, I am pleased to report that following the formation of the Inclusive Government in February 2009, my government has made significant progress in addressing the political and economic challenges that the country had faced over the last few years. The Government adopted the Short Term Emergency Recovery Programme (STERP), a programme which aims at attaining macroeconomic stability and growth, consistent with the country's Industrial Development Policy. In the short period of its implementation, significant progress has registered, with an increase in

the extremely low levels of capacity utilization from 5% to 40% currently obtaining in the manufacturing sector.

Mr President, these significant achievements should further be enhanced through the support of the international development partners. To this end my government calls for the removal of the illegal economic sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe by some countries, which have had severe repercussions on the country's economic, industrial and social sectors.

Mr President, given the scope and pace and therefore the challenges of the current global economic slowdown, the mandate of UNIDO in assisting developing countries attain sustainable industrial development necessary for their economic development and meaningful participation in the global economy, is now more compelling than in the past. The global recession is negatively affecting Africa evident in the decline in trade and productivity, investment flows, remittances and decline in ODA. For Africa to cope with these challenges, it should increase its

share of global trade by value addition of its raw commodities and exporting finished products.

Trade capacity building becomes more critical in this regard. This would ensure that products from developing countries meet the acceptable international standards. To this end my delegation thus urges UNIDO to expend greater efforts in mobilizing the requisite technical and financial support from cooperating countries and financial institutions.

My delegation commends UNIDO's efforts in promoting agro-industrial development. We therefore welcome the comprehensive study conducted aimed at generating new approaches for enhancing the development of African agro-industries. Given the critical role agriculture plays in Zimbabwe's economy, now accounting for 17% of GDP and 60% of inputs into manufacturing, we urge UNIDO to pay greater attention to strengthening the transfer of the requisite technology within the context of South-South cooperation to assist developing countries add value to their raw commodities. Further, we also urge UNIDO to

enhance the dissemination of information on these technologies including where it can be sourced. The development of agro-industries has greater potential to contribute to economic growth, employment and wealth creation in developing countries, Zimbabwe included.

We are further pleased to note the number of specific projects in the three thematic areas namely poverty reduction through productive activities, trade capacity building and environment and energy, particularly in Africa within the framework of the Medium Term Framework for 2008-2011, that UNIDO has implemented and developed. My delegation expresses its appreciation for the support being given to Zimbabwe for the Development of Senior Government Officials capacity to implement Science and Technology activities as well as the development of rural women and youth entrepreneurship.

Zimbabwe also wishes to register its support for UNIDO's initiatives to promote South-South cooperation, in particular the activities being undertaken in building

business linkages for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) within the framework of trade capacity building. We however urge UNIDO to increase funding for these projects given their importance to economic development and poverty reduction.

Regarding energy development, Zimbabwe has now crafted an integrated National Energy Policy that envisages the production of renewable and cleaner energy sources. In this regard Zimbabwe is increasing the production of energy to power sugar mills and surrounding communities through bagasse, resuscitating the production of Ethanol from sugar cane, and scaling up the production of Bio-diesel without compromising food security, from the jatropha beans, soya and cotton seed. Government has also embarked upon initiatives to expand the mini – hydro electric power plants for rural communities in off-grid areas

Zimbabwe is also keen to benefit from the Global Environment Facility for sustainable renewable energy use.

In conclusion, Zimbabwe wishes to thank members of the African Group for supporting its candidature to the Industrial Development Board for the period 2009 – 2014.

I thank you.