

IT APPIATENG.

Statement on behalf of the Staff of UNIDO to the forty-first session of the

Industrial Development Board, by the President of UNIDO Staff Union,

Eric Appiateng, Vienna, June 2013

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Mr. Yumkella, out-going Director-General,

Mr. Li Yong, Director-General elect,

Dear Colleagues,

All protocols observed;

As UNIDO Staff Union President, I deem it a particular honour to address the forty-first session of the Industrial Development Board.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Some 20 years ago, the staff strength of UNIDO totalled some 1,500 regular staff-members.

Today, the staff complement is close on half of that.

The UNIDO of 20 years ago boasted a comprehensive and self-reliant secretariat. Its programme activities and the requisite support services were the very hallmarks of a genuine and effective specialised agency.

Today, UNIDO is but a shadow of its former self.

Over the years, the secretariat has loyally implemented a whole series of strategic blueprints drawn up by well-intentioned member states. It is thus all the more disheartening to see UNIDO still facing unrelenting threats that jeopardise its very existence. As you can imagine, all these developments have raised doubts about the degree of support that member states are willing and able to lend the Organization.

At the same time, UNIDO staff appreciates all the more the efforts of those member states that are still holding fast - and their renewal of commitment to the endeavours of UNIDO. This revival of spirit was borne out by the conclusions adopted at the twenty-ninth session of the Programme and Budget Committee last month – most particularly, the recommendation that this session of the Industrial Development Board adopts the budget proposals for the biennium 2014-2015.

For all that, the staff of UNIDO knows just too well that the budget proposals for the coming biennium were the outcome of protracted consultations and often reluctant compromises struck by member states. Of necessity, ways and means had to be found for accommodating the shortfall in resources arising from the imminent withdrawal of France.

In a worst-case scenario, it could well have rung the death knell of UNIDO.

From the staff perspective, France's announcement of its withdrawal was a double whammy. Not only did the announcement come as a complete surprise, but it also dealt staff a demoralizing blow. Discord and dismay loomed large. This was immediately recognized by the Committee of Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA): one of the staff bodies representing more than 60,000 staff-members in the United Nations common system. At its annual general meeting in April, CCISUA published a strong message of solidarity and support for UNIDO and its staff.

Mr. President, you will agree that whenever a member state withdraws – be it withdrawals past, withdrawals present or withdrawals future, of which rumours already speak – they ineluctably give rise to the feeling among staff that member states little appreciate the work that they, the staff members, carry out on behalf of the Organization.

To you distinguished representatives of the member states, I would unashamedly claim that UNIDO staff is among the best, if not **the** best, in the multilateral system. My conviction stems from my awareness of the Organization's regular interaction and collaboration with other agencies, both at headquarters and in the field. I also know that major funding mechanisms, be it the Multilateral Fund for the implementation of the Montreal Protocol or the Global Environment Facility, have testified to the trend-setting initiatives that UNIDO has contributed to their programme and thematic priorities. Further to the widely acclaimed role and achievements of UNIDO in the areas of agro-industries and trade capacity building, green industry as well as research and industrial statistics, I wish to state most emphatically that UNIDO management and staff have never failed to meet, and in most cases have exceeded, the expectations of member states and donors.

meant working in high-risk environments, including responding effectively and efficiently to the industrial needs of countries emerging from conflicts. The above achievements would not have been feasible without the Organization's effective and efficient administrative and support services-which despite its disproportionate size, have gone beyond call of duty to be able to meet the challenges.

Mr. President, in the hand-over notes it presented to the outgoing Director-General, the staff of UNIDO has paid tribute to the inordinate lengths to which the Informal Working Group went in laying down the principles for the future of UNIDO. Those efforts have taken on tangible form in the Strategic Guidance Document with a set of recommendations for managing the future activities of the Organization.

In that context, the Staff Union has set about formulating a series of strategic concepts. In the opinion of staff at large, the ideas contained in those concepts will effectively complement the work performed by the Informal Working Group.

The Staff Union's contribution to safeguarding the future of UNIDO will be shared with the incoming administration as part and parcel of a process for **an inclusive and effective partnership between staff and management.**

UNIDO staff members thus harbour high hopes where the upcoming regular session of the General Conference to be held in Lima later this year is concerned. The Lima Declaration of 1975 was the very wellspring of the complete UNIDO mandate that guided the work of UNIDO for many years. Now close to forty years on, staff has every expectation that the

General Conference will present a unique opportunity for member states to renew their good faith and give voice to their unshakeable political and financial commitment to supporting UNIDO and its work on a sustainable basis.

The staff's sincere hopes derive from a firm belief that the present global challenges could be overcome and sustainability assured, if the millions, who live in less privileged societies and grapple with inconceivable financial woes almost every day of their lives, were to become equal partners in the global economic system. Thus enabled, they could contribute their share to global economic growth and sustainable development.

Mr. President, UNIDO staff is forever ready to assist those millions in keeping with the spirit and directives of the Organization's mandate.

I wish to conclude by assuring you, Sir, of staff's unflagging commitment to the aims and objectives of the Organization and the cause of development that benefits all. We take this opportunity to reaffirm our determination to continue in that spirit in the years ahead. Together with member states, we can and shall do everything necessary to ensure that spirit prevails.

Thank you.

