



**Statement on Agenda Item 3**

**by**

**The Delegation of Sri Lanka**

**at the**

**41<sup>st</sup> Session of the Industrial Development Board**

**24 – 27 June 2013**

*Mr. President (H.E. Antonio GARCÍA REVILLA of Peru)*

On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, let me congratulate you on your election as President of the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the IDB and extend my delegation's fullest support to your endeavours. My delegation is confident that under your able leadership, this session will reach a fruitful conclusion.

Personally I am very much pleased to serve with you on the bureau and facilitate your task of leadership. My congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau.

At the outset, it is important to pay compliments to the Director General who, with his dedicated staff, has worked tirelessly, to make this session successful. The diligent preparation of documents and meeting arrangements by the Secretariat is commendable.

Ambassador Balazs Csuday of Hungary, who had ably guided to success the 40<sup>th</sup> Session of the IDB, a historic milestone for this organization, deserves our special appreciation.

My delegation associates itself with the Statements made by the distinguished Representative of Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and by the distinguished Representative of China on behalf of Asia and the Pacific Group under Agenda Item 3. They have clearly stated the priorities of the respective groups as well as expectations on UNIDO in the future.

Mr. President, let me also take the opportunity to congratulate Mr. Li Yong of China for his election to the post of Director General of UNIDO which awaits the approval of the Special Session of the General Assembly convening on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2013. A vast majority of Members of the Board have reposed their confidence in the wisdom and ability of the

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successful candidate to chart the organization towards fully achieving its objectives in the next four years. As a friendly country of China, Sri Lanka takes pride in seeing a national of China assuming an important position – the first time of its kind for China since the establishment of the UN system.

Mr. President,

The Annual Report 2012 of UNIDO, as Director General Yumkellah has emphasized, is more compact than last year's and, in terms of its content, more qualitative than the previous ones. The report highlights the achievements made by UNIDO in the three thematic areas of its mandate last year, as well as the challenges that the organization needs to live up to, to make itself more effective, efficient and relevant in the future.

The report identifies several strengths of UNIDO. One of its major strengths lies in the realm of mobilization of financial resources. As the current figures now show, this strength is however, <sup>devalued</sup> due to 'the financial' meltdown faced by some of the industrial countries. In terms of its thematic priorities, environment and energy has attracted the largest share of overall funding. Nevertheless, funding for other thematic priorities has also recorded an increase.

Further, that the Organization has more than doubled its technical cooperation delivery over the past 10 years is also exemplary. One may not be faulted for calling it 'the technical cooperation decade of UNIDO', which has brought it distinction as an effective provider of inclusive and sustainable industrial development services. What is remarkable of this decade though, is that a larger part of it has been characterized by the tenure of Dr. Yumkellah at the helm of the Organization.

Regardless of all these achievements, UNIDO remains at a crossroads today, Director General Yumkellah outlines some of the major challenges during his presentation this morning. UNIDO possesses all the attributes of a sustainable, effective and continually

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evolving organisation as Annual Report 2012 amply illustrates. Its contribution to the intergrated field of sustanibale energy and industrial development as well as to the Rio + 20 processes and outcome, to the ongoing discourses on post-2015 development agenda, and in particular, most recently, to the High Level Conference of Middle Income Countries in San Jose is widely acknowledged. These and many other things, to which UNIDO has made significant contributions, stand out among the unique strengths of the organization. These need to be encouraged and consolidated.

This notwithstanding the current reality seems different. This year in particular appears to mark one of the most trying periods in the Organisation's history, due to emerging challenges, especially relating to financial constraints faced by some Member States which have made significant contributions to UNIDO over the years. We trust that there is an increasing realization, however, that it is an organization that needs to survive and thrive, specially given the mandate it has assumed over the years, specially in the areas of energy, environment and sustainable or industrial development.

Mr. President,

Noting with satisfaction the Organisation's achievements in the area of technical cooperation during the past year, my delegation welcomes in particular the increase in submitted projects in the Asia Pacific region. The support the Organisation has extended over the years to Sri Lanka and other countries in the region in this respect is remarkable. Currently, active UNIDO projects in the areas of fisheries, mini hydro power, agriculture and trade capacity building are making a valuable and positive contribution towards uplifting the lives of rural people in Sri Lanka. As the next cycle of country projects begins shortly, Sri Lanka and UNIDO remain engaged in a very constructive process of consultation with a view to achieving the best outcome for both.

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Mr. President,

As I said before, UNIDO is at a cross road today. It has come to an important juncture when the leadership of UNIDO itself is in transition. It is important to acknowledge and appreciate the work of those who helped to bring the organization to what it is now, while welcoming the new leadership. My delegation wishes to record with appreciation the dynamic and result oriented leadership given by Dr. Kandeh Yumkella, Director General of UNIDO, for the past seven years.

His foresight, drive and determination to steer UNIDO through some difficult times, affected by events beyond the control of the Organisation, need to be sincerely appreciated. We wish to assure him of Sri Lanka's continued support in his new role as the UN Secretary General's Special Representative on Sustainable Energy for All and wish him success in his future endeavours.

Mr. President,

The challenges faced by UNIDO in the recent past, reflect the reality of an inevitable phenomenon in the management of international organizations, namely continuity and change. The incoming Director General will build upon the strong foundation and strengthen this Organisation, while perusing structural and other reforms, to ensure that UNIDO remains ahead of the curve in responding to challenges more effectively.

It is in this regard that we must also consider the Strategic Guidance Document, which is being submitted to the Board for necessary action. This document is a culmination of consultations undertaken by Ambassador Ana Dengo Benavides of Costa Rica and Mr. Groffe of Switzerland for over 18 months, and reflects the common minimum that could constitute a strategic vision and guidance for the Organisation, to position itself in the evolving international development scenario. This will be instrumental as UNIDO seems

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to enhance the role and contribution to the ongoing process towards shaping the post – 2015 Development Agenda.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me once again assure UNIDO of Sri Lanka's continued support for the Organisations' future activities and reiterate our deep appreciation to Dr. Kandeh Yumkella for his outstanding leadership of this Organisation for the past seven years.

Thank you.

*(Delivered by HE A L A Azeez, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013)*