

Statement

by Ambassador A. L. A. Azeez, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to UNIDO at the Fifteenth Session of the UNIDO General Conference, 3 December 2013, Lima

Madam President,

On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, let me congratulate Your Excellency Madam Gladys Trivenko, Minister of Production of Peru, on your election as President of this Conference. We also congratulate the members of the bureau who will be facilitating the work ahead, in the coming days. We take this opportunity, as well, to express our sincere appreciation of the outgoing President and bureau for their excellent work in the past two years.

My delegation is pleased to assure you, Madam President, of its fullest cooperation with all your endeavours, including the initiatives taken by the host country, Peru, to provide further impetus and thrust to the work of UNIDO.

We wish Director General Li Yong and his staff the very best as they steer the organization with renewed verve and dynamism.

Today is a defining moment for UNIDO. We have adopted the Lima Declaration; "Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development" which was negotiated in Vienna for over two months. Many factors have come together here. This Conference takes place outside of the UNIDO Headquarters for the first time in twenty years. DG Li Yong is the first

head of any UN agency from the People's Republic of China, reflecting that country's desire to give pro-active leadership to UN initiatives. We are today at the mid-point between two significant milestones- Rio+20 of June 2011 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda expected in September 2015. The Conference also takes place against the continuing backdrop of a very slow recovery from the 2008 financial meltdown.

Madam President,

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 Iran on behalf of the Asia-Pacific Group at the General Debate.

The Government of Sri Lanka remains committed to advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development in a resilient and equitable manner, and is implementing a number of projects which aim to create employment for youth while improving the economic condition of its people. The projects facilitated by UNIDO in Sri Lanka also strengthen our national efforts towards economic empowerment of rural communities.

Madam President,

The Lima Declaration adopted by this Conference is of special value for two particular reasons. In addition to building on the related aspects of the Rio+20 Outcome and other international processes, including the High Level Event of the UN General Assembly on Post-2015 Development

Agenda, it seeks to set a new pace and a conceptual framework for the future direction of UNIDO as we move into a period of intensive consultations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Goals. Further, it has also provided a significant platform for renewing our political commitments to collectively advancing the goal of industrial development, thereby strengthening UNIDO's thematic priorities and technical cooperation.

Madam President,

We note with satisfaction UNIDO's achievements in the area of technical cooperation in 2011 and 2012. There was an increase in submitted projects in the Asia Pacific region as well as in a few other regions. However, it is worrying that there is a decline in technical cooperation activities in the first three quarters of 2013, but we hope that this will improve with the Secretariat continuing to devise innovative ways of effective use of its financial resources.

Madam President,

The future of the UNIDO is the future of the industrial development in many countries. In this context we welcome the "Strategic Guidance Document", which is now before the General Conference for consideration. Especially at a time when the new Director General seeks to take the Organization towards Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development, this document will serve both as a source of guidance as well as a strategic input for him in fashioning his work and approaches.

In our view, inclusive and sustainable development is a timely concept for a number of reasons.

First, industrial development has been the key to employment generation, economic development and poverty reduction. This is a fact that we have learnt from history. Most countries in the developing world missed out on this opportunity due to a variety of factors including resource constraints, lack of capacity building assistance and transfer of technology and knowhow. Many developing countries that have begun to progress along the path of national advancement in recent years have relied on industrial development. We have already begun to see the results of this development as hitherto stagnant economies have begun to pick up steam.

Second, inclusive growth, which emphasizes equity - an important goal of sustainable development- plays a significant role in achieving poverty eradication. The Rio+20 Outcome, followed by the San Jose Declaration of the High Level Conference of Middle Income Countries, reaffirmed that eradicating poverty is the greatest challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for development.

Third, it has been observed empirically in many countries, including some of the developed countries, that there has been a growing disparity between growth and employment. 'Jobless' growth, especially in LDCs has only led to an increase of pressure on social stability. Employment creation needs therefore to be at the centre

of growth strategies. Inclusive and sustainable industrial development has the potential to contribute towards this end.

Fourth, today's industrial development must avoid the environment degrading mistakes of past industrialization. Therefore, it is essential that appropriate and environment friendly technology be utilized in the process. We can develop our economies while preserving the environment through a careful balancing of our approach. UNIDO has a vital role to play in identifying, and making access possible to, such technologies. Its green industry platform, which emphasizes the use of renewable energy in industries, is a step in the right direction.

Fifth, technology by necessity must involve Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). ICT appears to provide the foundation for modern innovation, production, marketing and many other aspects in the contemporary world. In fact, ICT can provide a convenient bridge from underdevelopment to development. A marriage between ICT and industrialization seems essential. Many developing countries that are surging ahead have successfully consummated this marriage. ICT expertise can be shared in South-South Cooperation ventures.

I thank you, Madam President.