Green Industry Platform – Second Advisory Board Meeting

22 September 2014 – New York, USA

Opening Remarks by Mr. LI Yong, Director General of the
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

Excellencies,
Distinguished Board members,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to welcome you to New York and to open today’s meeting of the UNIDO-UNEP Green Industry Platform Advisory Board. It is also a particular privilege to preside over a meeting of government, business and civil society leaders who have publicly committed to make the vision of a cleaner and more efficient model of industrial production a reality.
The type of commitment that you embody – both individually, and as a group – is emblematic of the cross-boundary, multi-stakeholder, cooperation that will be at the heart of all successful industrial development in the future.

Today’s meeting is being held on the eve of the 2014 United Nations Climate Summit, and at a time in which our future development trajectory is being charted through the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Major intergovernmental decisions such as these will significantly shape the future operating environment, and the purpose, of initiatives like the Green Industry Platform. The adoption and implementation of new global development goals and targets presents a challenge to governments and industry alike. However, the United Nations today are engaging with global businesses at a scale never seen before to ensure that the implementation of all goals will be feasible, relevant and effective for all concerned.

It is in this spirit that we are meeting today: to seize the opportunity to take ownership of the emerging development agenda, and to forge partnerships beyond all barriers to ensure that it is properly implemented. The Green Industry Platform, with its more than 200 members throughout the world who have agreed to pursue the same set of policies and practices, represents the vast potential of such partnerships.

Today’s meeting of the Platform’s Advisory Board will ultimately seek to determine how the Green Industry Platform can transform its potential into becoming an effective tool for the implementation of the post-2105 development agenda. While UNIDO and UNEP have carefully nurtured the Platform to maturity and achieved a high level of awareness and engagement since its launch at Rio+20, much still remains to be done on the ground.

The essential and inevitable transition to Green Industry – and ultimately a Green Economy – will be gradual. It will take a long-term commitment on the part of all stakeholders to decisively break from ‘business as usual’ and adopt the measures needed to create an inclusive and sustainable future. UNIDO and our partners are committed to driving this long-term transition and are prepared to lead where necessary. Given the Green Industry Platform’s highly promising premise and initial achievements, we are intent on moving it beyond its pilot phase and solidify its role as a catalyst for action on Green Industry.
In this context, we are looking forward to hearing your views and receiving your guidance on how to deepen the engagement of government, business and civil society and effectively increase the uptake and impact of Green Industry policies and practices around the world. We have the opportunity today to forge a new model of industrial production, in which a necessary balance is established between cooperation and competition, and competitiveness is not at odds with sustainability. Let us grasp this opportunity. I wish you very successful deliberations, and look forward to seeing a positive and inspiring outcome to this meeting. Thank you.