

***The 16th Session of the General Conference
The United Nations Industrial Development Organization
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Statement by

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Madam President
Hon'ble Ministers
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

Very Good Morning

At the beginning, I take this opportunity to warmly congratulate you, Madam President, on your election as President of this 16th Session of the General Conference of UNIDO. Let me join other delegates in extending our heartiest felicitations to Vice Presidents and other members of the Bureau. I assure you of my delegation's full support in your steering this session to a success.

Let me also convey my delegation's deep appreciation to the outgoing President of the General Conference, the distinguished Representative of the Government of Peru, for his excellent works and leadership.

I would also like to most sincerely thank Director General Mr. Li Yong for the warm hospitality extended and the UNIDO Secretariat for their hard works to put together this conference and the arrangement made for this event.

My delegation takes this opportunity to heartily welcome Marshall Islands as new Member of UNIDO.

Madam President,

You are aware that Bangladesh is a rapidly developing country, growing consistently over 6% annually during the last decade under the dynamic leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

In Bangladesh, we consider industrial development as a major contributor to our country's socio-economic progress. Our efforts towards industrialization of the country have been multi-dimensional.

The industrial development in our country has been taking place by way of promoting private entrepreneurs, facilitating investors from home and abroad by policy support like industrial policy, export and import policy, and fiscal policy- as well as the establishment of industrial estates, Export Processing Zones (EPZs), Economic Zones and Industrial Parks. Some of our industrialization efforts like industrial estates by Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation were put in place as back as early 1960s. We framed our Export Processing Zone Act in 1980. Private Export Processing Zones are there since late 1990s and Korean Export Processing Zone as the first such zone in Bangladesh has been in operation for more than a decade now.

We last made Industrial Policy in 2010 and it is under a process of updating now. Creation of the maximum employment opportunities, ensuring the rights of workers based on the labour policies, and ramping up the inflow of industrial investment in the country are the principles of our Industrial Policy. The policy is supportive to the ISID approach that seeks to benefiting people from industrial growth and shared prosperity among women and men in all countries. Sustainable industrial development with environmental integrity is central of our Industrial Policy, when ISID aims at ensuring support to broader economic and social growth within an environmentally sustainable framework.

So far, there are 450 industrial units in operation in eight (08) Export Processing Zones. EPZs of Bangladesh have now emerged as an important arena for foreign investment. As on September 2015 the total amount of actual investment in BEPZA stands at US Dollar 3.67 billion. Investors from 37 countries have so far invested in the EPZs of Bangladesh.

The cumulative value of the export of manufacturing products up to September this year from the Export Processing Zones amounts to US Dollar 47.63 billion and in the last financial year alone, the total export from the EPZs was US Dollar 6.11 billion, which accounts for around 19 % of our national export.

The EPZs have created direct **employment** for 4,28,839 Bangladeshi nationals, of which 64% is female. Moreover, about 4, 00,000 more have been employed indirectly for these EPZs. As the majority of the employees in EPZs and the garments industries are women, the industrial development has made or making significant contribution to women empowerment in our country.

We have improved working environment and wages of the workers significantly and ensured the rights and **welfare** of the workers of industries by laws. These include, amongst other things, education, medical, security, welfare and proper care for the children of female workers. Occupational health, safety and security measures at the industries are ensured too.

Environmental issues related to manufacturing industries are addressed by setting up of Central Effluent Treatment Plants at industrial zones. The industrial enterprises diversifying products have contributed significantly to export diversification of the country.

We express our sincere appreciation for the **contribution of UNIDO** to our industrial development. Through the BEST Programme, we have got exposure to international best practice by improving our systems for food safety requirements. Bangladesh still lacks capacity in industry specific instruments and knowhow in many areas. We hope that the UNIDO would continue its support to our industrialization efforts by providing such supports in the years ahead.

Madam President:

The success of Bangladesh in **achieving the targets of MDGs** is acclaimed globally by awarding our Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina with 'UN MDG Awards 2010', 'South-South Award' and 'Diploma Award' by Food and Agriculture Organization.

Now we have the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the world leaders at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September this year. This Agenda includes a set of

17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030. In order to attain those goals by our Country, we have very recently adopted the 7th Five-year Plan aligning our development goals with Global Development Agenda.

The 7th Five Year Plan has set a target of an average industrial growth of 7.03% to attain the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)-9 that commits to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.

The 7th Five Year Plan has set Goals and Targets with a view to attaining the real GDP growth of 8% by 2020 so as to support our plan to graduate from LDC to a middle income country by 2021. Such economic growth is expected, amongst others, to:

- Reduce poverty to 18.6% and extreme poverty to around 8.9% and income inequality;
- Improve gender equality in education, particularly in tertiary education (from 70% to 100%);
- Augment employment opportunity in the manufacturing sector from 15% to 20%;
- Increase the contribution of the manufacturing sector to 21% of GDP by FY20;
- Having substantial Foreign Direct Investment to country;
- Ensure sustainable urban development that supports increased productivity, investment and employment;
- Ensure Environmental Sustainability.

Before I conclude, while I reaffirm our commitment towards the UNIDO, I call upon the UNIDO to broaden and deepen its support, technological and others, for the capacity building in the industrial sector of all LDCs including Bangladesh which are in the path of graduating to a middle income country

I thank you all.