



*The Permanent Mission of Italy
to the International Organizations
in Vienna*

I T A L Y

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Filippo Formica

Head of the Italian Delegation to the
16th Session of the General Conference of UNIDO
Vienna, 30 November - 4 December 2015

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Thank you, Madam President,

Let me join previous speakers in welcoming you as the President of the 16th Session of the General Conference of UNIDO. Please consider the full support of the Italian delegation to your commendable endeavours. I would also like to thank the Director General and the Secretariat for having organized so effectively this important Conference.

Madam President, Director General, Excellences,

The statement delivered by the European Union fully reflects the Italian views on the items under consideration of the General Conference. Nonetheless, I would like to add a few remarks in our national perspective.

Over time, Italy has been supportive of UNIDO with a longstanding tradition of commitment to the full breadth of its activities and programs of technical cooperation.

It is, therefore, not surprising that several pages of the Annual Report 2014 tell about many successful initiatives financed by Italy. [And] we are glad that some of them have been selected as success-stories worth a dedicated presentation during the UNIDO Donor Meetings.

These are reliable indicators of a stable and fruitful relationship, based on a common understanding of the importance of manufacturing and industrialization, as key-drivers of a sustained economic growth. Through UNIDO, Italy aims at promoting a balanced and sustainable pattern of industrial development.

In doing that, Italy is making the most of its world-renowned entrepreneurial spirit, sharing its expertise and know-how. Take, for instance, our SMEs and Co-operatives clusters. Thousands of these firms underpin the Italian economic model, being the backbone of our productive system, which also includes an extensive network of locally based credit institutions. All these companies are closely interconnected and deeply embedded in their territories.

Not only these “glocal” enterprises are seeking a return for their shareholders, but they also yield benefits to their communities, helping preserve their identity. They are particularly suited to promoting a sustainable development in all its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. This is the kind of experience we would like to share with our partners and this is indeed a strategic priority of our Development Cooperation in the industrial sector, together with the promotion of gender equality as well as of training activities, especially for young people, and capacity building for Countries’ institutions.

We are currently the fourth largest contributor to the Regular Budget of the organization, the second one among the EU Members. In the last 15 years, we have been the largest donor, granting overall more than 150 Mio EUR in voluntary contributions. The current portfolio of ongoing projects financed by Italy through UNIDO still totals more than 27 Mio EUR. It consists of 34 initiatives in 24 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the MENA region, Central and Southeast Asia, and Latin America. In this respect, I am also glad to announce that we have just granted contributions to four new UNIDO projects in Somalia, Ethiopia and Lebanon, worth overall more than 6 Mio EUR.

All these funds have been used to create longstanding development opportunities and sustainable jobs for the local communities. At the same time, partnerships and synergies with our national economic system have been enhanced, spreading the Italian business model and promoting our manufacturing excellences in several areas, including agro-industry, design and the green economy.

Madame President,

We believe that with the adoption of the Lima Declaration in 2013 the UNIDO Member States laid down the foundation for a sharper role of the organization in defining and coordinating relevant aspects of the global industrial agenda within the general framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The 2030 Agenda itself will open up new opportunities for UNIDO, starting from the implementation of SDG 9 dedicated to infrastructure, industry and innovation. We are confident that UNIDO will be able to live up with these opportunities, provided it will take full advantage of its qualified experience in: poverty eradication through sustainable industrialization; trade capacity building; energy and environmental sustainability of manufacturing processes; agro-industry and technical assistance for promoting standards and quality control in industrial production.

The Annual Report well epitomizes the good results accomplished by UNIDO with its programs in all these areas. I can see a common and distinctive trait among them, which precisely lies in the capacity to create job opportunities and to trigger a self-reinforcing economic growth based on industrial development in the recipient communities.

It is not just about solidarity, a word that my country knows very well, confirming it every day by saving thousands of lives of migrants coming from the northern shores of Africa. Ensuring first care. Assisting them and giving them hope.

All these people escaping from a condition of poverty, need, conflict or persecution, deserve concrete answers and action from the international community. In this respect, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda must represent a turning point, in particular for the Least Developed Countries, whose fast graduation must represent a priority goal also for UNIDO.

We need to strengthen our cooperation and forge new partnerships, in order to address the root causes that force migrants to leave their families.

We believe that UNIDO might - and should - have a say in this regard. [But] in order to do so, to accomplish its ambitious goals and to work properly, the Organization will need the support of all its membership.

Madam President,

We are glad that the last PBC and IDB were able to take a consensual decision on the budget for the biennium 2016-17. It is important that the Secretariat will continue to operate within a clear financial framework.

We believe that IDB Conclusion entitled “PROGRAMME AND BUDGETS, 2016-2017” includes a set of clear guidelines that will allow UNIDO to carry out its mandate, as set in the MTPF 2016-19. We, therefore, look forward to the formal approval of this Conclusion by this General Conference and to its full implementation.

Although we are confident that the approved budget proposal and the establishment of the two new funds for voluntary contributions to core activities will allow UNIDO to fulfill its tasks, we should bear in mind that keeping up with the very high rates of TC delivery in the last years will continue to be the foremost challenge for this organization.

In this regard, the current financial framework, though undoubtedly constrained by the recent withdrawal of some Member States, should be considered also as an opportunity to devise innovative solutions and to focus on providing those services where UNIDO may still have a clear comparative advantage on other organizations.

From this perspective, Italy sees a potential in the new Partnership Country Program approach. [And] yesterday, during the IV ISID Forum, it was clearly shown how much my country is committed, for instance, to the implementation of the PCP in Ethiopia. We also believe that the PCP will serve as a bottom-up tool for a systematic survey of Member States' priority needs and demands for industry-related services, particularly in LDCs. In our opinion, such a review is necessary to properly assess the quality and the adequacy of UNIDO's toolbox and, if needed, to readjust it accordingly.

As we said already during the last IDB, matching UNIDO's supply with Member States' actual demands will be key to the success of the PCP approach.

We, therefore, would like to take this opportunity to stress once again the importance of close consultations with Member States, also on the process of mainstreaming the PCP, and to express our full support to the Director General in all his continued efforts to advance further transparency, efficiency and effectiveness in the Organization.

Madam President,

With this comments, allow me to conclude by reaffirming Italy's confidence in the capacity of UNIDO to give a significant contribution in the global effort to implement the 2030 Agenda and build a more prosperous, equitable and sustainable world.

I thank you Madam President.