



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY !

**Statement by Ambassador Barbara Žvokelj,
Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the International Organizations in Vienna,
on the occasion of the 19th Session of the General Conference
United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)
General debate
Vienna, 1 December 2021**

Mr. President,

Let me start by congratulating you, Ambassador Mezghani, for your election and wish you every success. I would also like to assure you of Slovenia's full support. In addition to the EU statement on behalf of the EU Member States, I would like to make a few re-marks in my national capacity.

Not to take time under different agenda items, allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate to you, Dr. Gerd Müller on your election as the new Director General of UNIDO. We look forward to maintaining a successful cooperation between my country and the Organization under your leadership.

Let me also express our appreciation to the outgoing Director General, Mr. Li Yong, for leading this Organization with passion over the past eight years. Slovenia values your devotion to UNIDO's unique mandate on inclusive and sustainable industrial development. We also appreciate your efforts in expanding partnerships. We see these as crucial for UNIDO to be recognized as a strategic partner in addressing the global challenges, including the climate change.

Just a few weeks ago the COP26 climate change conference concluded. The summit brought countries together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. As the country holding the presidency of the EU Council, Slovenia is proud to have contributed to the overall result. In this connection, let me express our strong support to the resolution on the Development of an UNIDO Strategy in Response to Climate Change, which has been submitted by the EU and its Member States.

While recognizing the need for strengthening our climate action, it is also important to acknowledge the potential of digitalization in minimizing the impacts of climate change. In this sense, we welcome UNIDO's 4IR strategic framework, which also aims to advance smart production for climate action.

Being aware of the opportunities offered by Industry 4.0, digital transformation and increasing competitiveness of the private sector stand high in our development agenda as well. This is also why the month of December is marked by Industry 4.0 and Robotics within

the main economic event of the Slovenian EU Presidency. A full array of events on this topic, both for professionals and for general public, several also dedicated to youth, is being organized in a hybrid format. Furthermore, Slovenia is also contributing to sharing knowledge, experiences and best practices in the field of Industry 4.0 through UNIDO technical cooperation projects, financed by our Government.

Mr. President, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,

As we gather here this week under the motto "Building a Better Future" to mark the 55th anniversary of UNIDO and reflect on its achievements, I must also underline the need for UNIDO to keep on track in the implementation of its 2020–2023 Gender Strategy. Only this way we can ensure that no one is left behind.

Thank you, Mr. President.