

**Statement of the Director General Mr. LI Yong during the 20th anniversary
celebrations of the Group of 77
Tuesday, 11 September 2018 at 17:45 Board Room D**

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by saying how pleased and honoured I am to be here with you today for the 20th anniversary celebrations of the establishment of the Group of 77 Vienna Chapter in UNIDO.

I would like to specifically express my gratitude to His Excellency Ambassador Játiva from Ecuador for organizing and sponsoring today's celebration.

Let me go back in history and emphasize the continuous importance of the G-77's original mission. Since its establishment in 1964 during the First session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 1), the Group of 77 has been an advocate for the economic development of developing countries and emerging nations of the South through the will of its members to lend themselves a strong, common voice in economic matters. The strength that stems from its unity has not declined despite the global challenges and the growth of the Group, which nowadays counts 134 members, united in their vision to create a more equitable economic world order.

The Group's vision, reflected by the commitment to sustainable economic development, is equally deeply incorporated in the heart of UNIDO. Industrialization is a necessary step towards the creation of a world that is more equitable in economic terms, with the aim towards diminishing and ultimately eradicating poverty. This historical correlation between economic and industrial development is now reflected *inter alia*, in SDG 9. Our Organization has committed itself to work towards the achievement of this goal, in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Let me now turn to today's 20th anniversary celebration of the Vienna Chapter under the aegis of UNIDO. I am grateful on how cooperation has strengthened among the G-77 and UNIDO, kicked off by the establishment of the Chapter in 1998 by the then Director-General Mr. Carlos Magariños and Her Excellency Ambassador Nozipho Maxakato-Diseko, Permanent Representative of South Africa and Chairperson of the G-77. This well-functioning intergovernmental body has helped the international community in key decision-making processes and triggering the needed dialogue among its members to accelerate sustainable development in the industrial field. Ever since its formal establishment on 19 May 1998, the Vienna office of the G-77 has served as the group's institutional memory resulting in strengthened co-ordination in the group's activities in all United Nations Vienna-based Organizations (VBOs). The office will continue to serve as an important channel for further strengthened coordination, communication and cooperation among all the VBOs with their different agendas and the six different G-77 chapters.

Throughout everything, the Group has never lost sight of its mission and vision to create a more equitable, international and economic world order for living well. We should not forget that the biggest challenge of our time remains the global eradication of poverty.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In closing, let me reiterate my congratulations to the G-77 Vienna Chapter. I was told that during the last 20 years the office serviced around 2600 meetings for all United Nations Vienna-based Organizations, an average of about 130 meetings per year out of which one-quarter is on UNIDO matters. These impressive numbers underline the importance of this office for the continued cooperation between the G-77 and UNIDO, as well as the other VBOs. Through our Liaison Offices, the G-77 contributes significantly and helps to enhance inter-agency dialogue and therefore facilitates a more coherent negotiation and decision making process. On account of this importance, UNIDO is pleased to be able to finance this office by providing an officer since the chapter's establishment.

I sincerely thank and wish to express our gratitude to the Group of 77 and China for its continuous long-lasting support and confidence in UNIDO, its strengthened and rewarding cooperation, its promotion of ISID and particularly, its support in advocating UNIDO's current and relevant role in inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

Please be assured of UNIDO's commitment in continuing the support and facilitation of the work of the Vienna Chapter.

Thank you.