

item 3: Annual report of the Director General

Thank you Mr/Mrs.Chair. Let me begin by congratulating you on your election as chair of this session.

Sweden fully aligns itself with the statement made by Slovakia on behalf of the European Union. However, I wish to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Sweden highly appreciates the work performed by UNIDO. Industrial development is a key factor in boosting development in developing countries and transition economies, and UNIDO's contribution to this work is very important.

With significant investments in UNIDO, amounting to approximately 27 million USD in voluntary contributions over a multiyear period, Sweden is, on a global level, one of the five largest donors to UNIDO. That funding is mainly directed towards projects in Technical and Vocational Education and Training as well as in standardization. These projects are highly appreciated, not least by industrial partners, including some of Sweden's biggest international corporations. They constitute interesting examples of private sector engagement in development cooperation efforts.

As one of the largest donors, Sweden will continue to engage with UNIDO and support its continuous efforts for maximum development results and organizational performance. We follow with interest the organization's implementation of the Integrated Results and Programme Framework (IRPF), and encourage UNIDO to continue its committed results-oriented work. The Transparency Initiative and the Open Data Platform are important measures to increase access to information, and thus build confidence, with both member states and the larger development community, including civil society actors.

Sweden furthermore welcomes that the Framework highlights gender equality and the urgent need to harness the economic potential of women. In 2015, UNIDO adopted its first gender strategy, aiming at strengthening gender equality both in the service UNIDO delivers, and within the organization itself. It is clear, that unless we take more concerted action to empower women economically and politically, we will not achieve the SDGs.

Sweden recalls the discussions at the Program and Budget Committee earlier this year, and the recommendations by the External Auditor on resources for the internal oversight office and the establishment of an audit committee. Continuous evaluation of the organization's performance is a key tool for the organization itself, as well as for Member States in their governance and oversight. Therefore, we follow closely the issue of UNIDO's internal monitoring function. We have taken note of the cuts to the monitoring function and find this development worrisome. We draw your attention to the proposal tabled by the European Union under agenda item 4a with respect to the dedication of resources to functionally and operationally independent internal oversight.

On the funding of UNIDO, Sweden shares the concern expressed by many. Firstly, the organization needs a long-term sustainable balance between core funding and voluntary contributions. Secondly, we encourage UNIDO to explore ways of engaging with member states that have left the organization.