Opening Remarks

by

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at the

High-Level Seminar:
“Accelerating Sustainable Energy for All in Landlocked Developing Countries through Innovative Partnerships”

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(Conference Room C3)
High-Level Seminar:
“Accelerating Sustainable Energy for All in Landlocked Developing Countries through Innovative Partnerships”

- Mr. Martin Ledolter, Managing Director, Austrian Development Agency
- Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative, UN-OHRLLS
- H.E. Ms. Mwaba Patricia Kasese-Bota, Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations in New York and Global Chair of the Group of LLDCs
- Ms. Monika Weber-Fahr, Chief Operating Officer, Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All)
- Excellencies,
- Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

• On behalf of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, it is with a great pleasure that I welcome all of you, Honorable Delegates, to this High-Level Seminar on addressing important issues affecting landlocked developing countries, with particular emphasis on “Accelerating Sustainable Energy for All in LLDCs”.

• UNIDO is privileged to be collaborating with UN-OHRLLS and the Government of Austria in organizing this High-Level Seminar in Vienna.

• Two years ago in Vienna, we adopted the ‘Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024’.

• In doing so, we resolved to renew and strengthen the international community’s commitment to addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries.

As we know, most of the landlocked countries also face unique developmental challenges, and energy poverty and adverse impacts of
climate change further compound these challenges. Since these countries have to bear higher cost of transportation on goods and services, this further reduces their industrial competitiveness and consequently affects their productive capacities.

- The Vienna Programme for Action underscores the commitment of the international community to support the world’s 32 LLDCs. The Action Plan stresses that sustainable energy infrastructure and access to affordable, reliable and renewable energy and related clean technologies are critically important for enhancing productive capacity, achieving sustained economic growth, and promoting climate resilience of LLDCs.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I take this opportunity to reaffirm UNIDO’s commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Vienna Programme of Action. Especially in the context of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.

SDG 9 has embedded UNIDO’s universal mandate into the new policy framework. I am certain that Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development is one of the key ingredients for accelerated action towards a sustainable future for all LLDCs.

- Of special interest to us today is the progress towards SDG 7 that focuses on sustainable energy for all. SDG 7 strives to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all - and its three targets covering universal access; doubling renewable energy in the global energy mix; and doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency by 2030, set the global energy agenda for action on the ground. UNIDO strongly believes in promoting sustainable energy solutions and accelerating climate action, which I consider to be a key component in achieving all SDGs.
• While it is evident that all 17 SDGs have distinct roles to play in the transition to a sustainable world, linking SDG 7 on sustainable energy for all with SDG 9 on sustainable and inclusive industrialization and SDG 13 on climate action would facilitate the transition to a sustainable future without stifling the ambitious targets for economic growth in LLDCs.

• It is therefore timely that this High Level Seminar, in the context of Accelerating Sustainable Energy Access in LLDCs, focuses on these important priorities.

• UNIDO together with all partners would spare no effort to ensure that concrete results in financing sustainable energy transformation; building innovative partnerships; and enhancing regional cooperation are achieved on the ground, especially at national and regional levels.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

• The international development agenda gives us a new framework for action. Now, through innovative partnerships, we can scale up our joint ambitions and leapfrog in clean energy technologies and systems in LLDCs thereby ensuring that no-one is left behind in benefiting from achievement of SDGs.

• I am happy to note that this high-level seminar aims to take stock of national energy policies and coherent implementation strategies, emerging opportunities for resource mobilization, and the effectiveness of regional and international support and partnership frameworks. Thus this seminar represents a platform for the exchange of information on best practices and the development of adapted solutions to overcome remaining key barriers to achieving three goals of Sustainable Energy for All by 2030 in all LLDCs.

We in UNIDO firmly believe in harnessing the potential of regional cooperation in addressing the energy challenges, and sessions in the afternoon today will highlight the successes achieved in promoting sustainable energy solutions with our regional partners.
• Please allow me to conclude by articulating two difficult yet crucial questions that I would like to ask all distinguished participants and experts attending this important high level seminar to answer through brainstorming and discussions over the next two days:

  o How can we ensure sustainable transformation of current energy systems in LLDCs?

  o How can we enhance the cooperation around clean energy and innovative financing, and scale up private sector investments in achieve sustainable energy for all in LLDCs?

• I wish all the best to fruitful deliberations at this High-Level Seminar and thank you all very much for your kind attention.