

22 November 2004

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jean Ping,  
President of the 59th Session of the General Assembly,  
on the Occasion of Africa Industrialization Day**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, the United Nations family observes 'Africa Industrialization Day' with the collective spirit of supporting and promoting the sustainable industrial development efforts of the continent. The theme for this year's Africa Industrialization Day is 'Strengthening Productive Capacity for Poverty Reduction within the Framework of NEPAD.'

Poverty remains a big challenge for Africa. To achieve the millennium development goals, particularly the halving of income poverty, the African economies must grow. The estimates show that annual GDP per capita growth rates of 2 to 6 percent are required to meet this goal. In this context productivity enhancement plays a leading role.

As a key component of productivity successful industrialization is the motive force for applying new technologies and entrepreneurship development in Africa. It provides an enabling environment for human capital development, promotes institutional change, modernizes the export structure as well as creates new employment opportunities.

To alleviate poverty, African countries must introduce good industrial policies and promote domestic and foreign investment, expansion of markets, infrastructure development, employment and technological change. This goal can be pursued through regional integration and economic cooperation to gain access to international markets.

The leading role played by the Regional Economic Communities and the private sector in strengthening the productive capacities of the manufacturing sector is important to ensure sustain growth. With this aim, UNIDO and the Conference of the African Ministers of Industry (CAMI) have jointly launched the African Productive Capacity Initiative that was endorsed by the African Union Summit in July 2004 as industrial component of NEPAD.

This initiative will spell out policies and measures enabling African countries enhance their productive capacities through a value chain approach and regional integration and enter the global production network.

We are happy to see that recognizing the importance of industry as a strategic factor of economic development NEPAD foresees strong industrial policies that will help African countries strengthen their productive capacities and ability to fight poverty. I am confident that Africa, with

its vast human and natural resources and strong commitment to the development goals will be able to achieve the objectives of NEPAD.

In this context, I would like to urge international community to enhance support to productive capacity building efforts of African countries in order to help them achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the objectives of NEPAD.

The strategy for strengthening the productive capacity for poverty reduction in Africa within the framework of NEPAD is undoubtedly a step in the right direction.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is a day to renew and reconfirm our commitment to work in global partnership and to contribute towards sustainable industrial development as an effective tool for poverty reduction in Africa.

Thank you.