

20 November 2006

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,  
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,  
on Africa Industrialization Day**

As we celebrate the 17th Africa Industrialization Day in accordance with the UN General Assembly Resolution 44/237 of 1989, we also join UNIDO in commemorating its 40th Anniversary. We pay tribute to all those who have helped keep UNIDO relevant and responsive to the requirements of developing countries, especially those in Africa.

This combined celebration is a timely opportunity to take stock of Africa's progress towards enhancing growth and development through sustainable industrialization.

Last year, developing countries accounted for about a quarter of global manufacturing and a third of global trade in manufactured products. Recent years have also witnessed a steady growth in South-South trade in commodities and manufactured products. Yet, Sub-Saharan Africa's share of world industrial output has remained stagnant at less than 1 per cent. Its share in South-South manufactured exports, total exports, and medium and high-technology exports has also been declining. These conditions highlight the continued importance of expanding and diversifying the economic base of African countries to encourage sustainable industrial growth. A concerted push towards viable national and regional strategies for product diversification, and higher value-added exports is crucial to this effort.

Of particular importance in this regard is the African Productive Capacity Initiative (APCI) pioneered by UNIDO and adopted by the African Union in July 2004 as the industrial component of NEPAD. The key objectives of this important initiative include market access, value addition based on local resources, diversification, technology diffusion, industrial upgrading, regional integration and poverty alleviation through job creation.

The decision of the African Union to devote its summit in July 2007 to the theme of industrial development should give renewed impetus to sustainable industrial growth throughout the continent. Through their stewardship and ownership of the industrial development process, Africa's leaders would be demonstrating their determination to develop their countries into modern, dynamic industrial economies.

As we celebrate this year's Africa Industrialization Day on the theme of "Poverty Reduction through Sustainable Industrial Growth," let us strengthen our common resolve to live in a world free from want and hunger. We can realize this vision through our collective determination and concrete actions.

It is on this note that I wish to commend UNIDO for its steadfast support of Africa's industrialization over the past 40 years. I congratulate UNIDO on its 40th anniversary and wish it continued success in meeting the challenges of industrial development in the years ahead.