

27<sup>th</sup> November 2017

**It has truly been a pleasure to address UNIDO, and other important stakeholders, first in Brussels on the occasion of a roundtable, which commemorated Africa Industrialisation Day, and also here in Vienna, for the 17th Session of UNIDO's General Conference.**

**The theme chosen for this year's General Conference, "Partnering for Impact: Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals", offers an essential context, in which to appraise and review our national, regional, and global commitment to the United Nations' Agenda 2030, and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals.**

**These goals are a benchmark for the international community, to achieve our aspirations for global sustainable development, by following a holistic, integrated, and long-term perspective.**

**As I stated during my remarks in Brussels, and further emphasised here in Vienna, I believe that the Global North and Global South are complementary and must be united, in order to create a meaningful implementation of Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.**

**This must necessarily include a new perspective on the potential of the African continent, as a source of incredible opportunity.**

**Africa is an emergent huge market, with an enormously important young workforce. In fact, by 2050, Africa's population will reach 2.5 billion.**

**I believe that the international community must see stakeholders in Africa as partners, to achieve new potential and innovative opportunities.**

**Africa does not need our charity; Africa deserves proper and sustainable investment, such as the various initiatives that are being undertaken by UNIDO.**

**In this way, we shall be effectively helping to empower Africa's youth potential, for the prosperity of all relevant stakeholders.**

**Let me take this opportunity to mention another initiative, with the potential to help, to achieve this vision of our united future. This is Global Africa, which I spoke about during my address at the General Conference.**

**Global Africa is a new space for policy dialogue and cooperation, on topics of African social, political and economic development.**

**It aims to facilitate initiatives related to the African continent, and to nurture interactions among civil society, businesses, cultural organisations, parliaments, and other entities, at all levels of engagement.**

**Global Africa's approach is to seek partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, to promote job creation, investment, knowledge, and skills in Africa.**

**Let me also mention one of Global Africa's proposals, that is the creation of the African School of Invention, which shall offer opportunities for training and education in the areas of creativity and innovation.**

**The proposal also corresponds well with UNIDO's own plans, for job creation and industrialisation in Africa.**

**It is also timely that the UNIDO General Assembly is taking place on the eve of the EU-Africa Summit in Abidjan. I hope that the Summit shall take into account the outcomes of this Assembly, and in particular UNIDO's Roadmap for the Implementation of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa.**

**During my contribution, I also highlighted several of Malta's ongoing initiatives in the area of sustainability and development. These included Malta's efforts, during its Presidency of the Council of the European Union, to keep development cooperation**

**on top of its agenda. This culminated in a new European Consensus for Development, which was adopted in May 2017.**

**On concluding, I believe that the way forward for our nations, to fully implement the incredible potential of the United Nations' Agenda 2030 and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals, is by working together and creating the necessary synergies between stakeholders in Europe, in Africa, and beyond.**

**We must commit ourselves to strategies of meaningful and long-term investment, especially in the potential of our communities and our societies, to achieve sustainable prosperity, for the benefit of all humanity.**