

**Transcript of the video message delivered by the UNIDO Director General at the Meeting of the 20<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers (CoM) at Baku, Azerbaijan, on October 15, 2012**

Excellencies  
Honourable Ministers  
Distinguished delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honour and a pleasure for me to address you with this short message because I could not be with you today.

UNIDO's cooperation with ECO goes back to 1994 with the signing of an agreement outlining the main areas in which we could work together. These areas include among others private sector development, investment promotion, sustainable industrial development and information exchange.

Since 1994, several milestones have been reached including trainings conducted in ECO countries and meetings between UNIDO and ECO to develop special projects for various countries.

An important milestone was the agreement reached during the UNIDO-ECO meeting in May 2012 to intensify cooperation and develop a new plan of action for future cooperation. Six areas of relevant cooperation for joint activities were identified at our meeting and we are working very hard to develop the programmes in those areas. Along the lines identified by ECO, UNIDO has developed an initial list of project proposals on trade capacity building, technology transfer, foreign investment promotion and SME enterprise development. The projects will be submitted to ECO for consideration.

I know you will be deliberating many issues during your meeting. This period of international development cooperation can be characterized by a period that we can call period of volatile transitions. There are many changes occurring around the world: the cost of energy is changing fast, population is rising, there are challenges of the financial crisis which started in 2008 which still continues to challenge many economies.

You, the Ministers of ECO, are dealing with all of these issues while at the same time trying to deal with climate change. The challenges of climate change are real and some of your regions, you know already, there is a frequency of adverse weather effects. We know there are changes in agricultural production

systems around the world. Therefore, the issue of sustainable development is relevant to you as it is to the rest of the world. And at the same time we know, that globally we need to increase food production by 50% by 2030 and by 70% by 2050. How can we do this, if the climate is changing so bad. That is part of the challenge you face, to deal with this challenge of providing food security to all of mankind, to create jobs for your citizens, and also jobs around the world and to ensure prosperity around the world so that we can have a safe stable world.

These are not easy challenges, however, I am confident that human beings are capable of innovating, of collaborating to share solutions and share technologies. That is why the cooperation you have with in ECO will be crucial. Sharing information, cooperating so that everybody benefits in your region, ensuring peace and stability in your region, for without peace, there can be no development. Without development, peace will not be sustained.

I wish you well in your discussions. If we, UNIDO can work with you, to promote these programmes that I have highlighted earlier, you can count on us that we would be ready.

Good luck in your deliberations, I look forward to getting a report from your meetings.

Thank you very much.