



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



Global Industry Summit 2025

The twenty-first session of the UNIDO General Conference
23–27 November 2025, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia



BACKGROUND

KEY INFORMATION

- **GC.21 reimagined:** the twenty-first session of the UNIDO General Conference transforms into the Global Industry Summit 2025;
- **Dates and place:** 23 to 27 November 2025, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia – a defining moment for the future of global industry;
- **Overarching theme:** “The power of investment and partnerships to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals”;
- **Purpose:** to convene Member States and international partners to forge a leading global platform to advance industrial transformation, mobilize investments and foster private sector development.

21ST SESSION OF THE UNIDO GENERAL CONFERENCE – THE FOUNDATION

- **Supreme legislative body:** 173 Member States shaping UNIDO’s future;
- **Policy and budget decisions:** the General Conference serves as UNIDO’s supreme policymaking organ. It establishes the guiding principles and policies of the Organization, and approves its budget and work programme;
- **Elections:** the General Conference elects the members of the subsidiary policymaking organs, specifically the Programme and Budget Committee and the Industrial Development Board.

21ST SESSION OF THE UNIDO GENERAL CONFERENCE – TRIGGER FOR A GLOBAL SUMMIT

- Convenes stakeholders from across sectors with a shared commitment to the role of industries for development, private sector development and investment mobilization to foster cross-sector collaboration and drive transformational impact.

MAIN OBJECTIVE

The Global Industry Summit 2025 will facilitate discussions on the role of industrial policy, targeted investments and strategic partnerships to leverage the potential of countries’ economic strengths and promising industries for economic growth, social well-being and environmental protection, i.e. showcasing how industries drive inclusive economic and sustainable development and transform lives.

MAIN ELEMENTS

The twenty-first session of the UNIDO General Conference will convene from 23 to 27 November 2025 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. As the supreme legislative body of UNIDO, the General Conference will conduct its essential functions throughout the week, providing a platform for Member States to deliberate on critical policy issues, governance matters, and the strategic direction of the Organization.

High-level Opening and Closing Ceremonies will be held on **23 and 27 November** respectively. Member States and other partners are encouraged to mobilize the participation of Government ministers, heads of organizations, and private sector leaders to exert influence over and actively shape the proceedings of the Conference and solidify the week’s outcomes.

Alongside the General Conference, the Global Industry Summit 2025 will hold dedicated thematic day on 24, 25, and 26 November, each with a specific focus designed to complement the formal proceedings and highlight UNIDO's thematic competencies, comparative advantages and unique value proposition within the broader development landscape:

- **24 November: Investments and Partnership Day**
Promoting the mobilization of resources, the fostering public-private partnerships, and the identification of opportunities for transformative industrial development.
- **25 November: Women's Empowerment Day**
Highlighting the critical role of women in industry, promoting gender-responsive industrial development, and sharing best practices and success stories.
- **26 November: Youth Day**
Focusing on empowering young innovators and entrepreneurs, addressing skills development, and exploring their contributions to shaping sustainable industrial futures.

Through this carefully designed structure, participants are invited to engage with the General Conference's formal governance processes, while also benefitting from thematic sessions designed to deliver concrete takeaways, foster interactive dialogue, and inspire collaboration across sectors.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

In its capacity as the supreme policymaking organ of UNIDO, the twenty-first session of the UNIDO General Conference will see:

- The appointment of the Director General;
- The adoption of a 'Riyadh Declaration', which will guide UNIDO's strategic direction in the medium- to long-term, ensuring that the Organization is focused and equipped for current and future development challenges, to be proposed formally by the Government of Saudi Arabia;
- Approval of UNIDO's programme and budgets, for 2026-2027;
- Appointment of an External Auditor from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026;
- Election of the members of the Programme and Budget Committee;
- Election of twenty-seven members of the Industrial Development Board; and
- The adoption of other decisions and resolutions.

Capitalizing on the convening power of the twenty-first session of the General Conference, the Global Industry Summit 2025 aims to deliver tangible benefits - from building strategic partnerships and unlocking investment opportunities to driving inclusive policies and demonstrating innovative solutions that empower people and protect the planet:

- Increased understanding of the development and implementation of industrial policies that foster sustainable and inclusive economic growth;
- Facilitation of new partnerships and investment opportunities in promising industrial sectors in Member States;
- Platform for the mobilization and integration of public and private sector partners and investments towards the accelerated contribution of industries for development;
- Provision of a platform for the creation of new partnerships and collaborative initiative between Member States, international organizations and the private sector;

- Increased understanding of UNIDO's contributions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the crucial role of industries in driving inclusive and sustainable development;
- Creation of a leading global platform that will foster continuous dialogue and collaboration on industrial transformation, policy and development.

GC.21 provides an opportunity to host a dynamic, visually impactful, and intellectually engaging event, comprising a series of concurrent events of various formats. In addition to the formal proceedings of the General Conference, the programme of additional events will transcend the conventional panel discussion format, with the objective of creating a memorable, interactive, and impactful summit. Therefore, Member States are encouraged to mobilize diverse delegations where the voices of governments, private sector representatives, civil society, youth and academia will all have a place at the table, ensuring a rich and inclusive dialogue.

Among the formats that are currently being explored are:

- Panel discussions;
- (Ministerial) Roundtables;
- Fireside chats;
- Solution Talks and TED- style presentations;
- Networking and matchmaking events;
- Interactive workshops;
- An interactive exhibition; and
- Dedicated spaces for bilateral meetings between governments and private sector representatives to foster productive partnerships.

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**to harness the transformative power of industries,
shaping a future where economic prosperity goes hand in hand with
social well-being and environmental sustainability.**

