

The 17th session of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development

Opening Remarks

- Excellency's, ladies and gentlemen. I am glad to have the opportunity to address you today, if only via video.
- As you are aware, we are in the midst of a process to define a new sustainable development framework to succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is both a great opportunity and a huge responsibility for the United Nations and the rest of the international community.

Role of Broadband

- There is wide acknowledgement that access to new and appropriate Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is critical to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
- We now have clear evidence that access to Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is lifesaving for the most vulnerable populations. Mobile technology has improved maternal health by reducing the distance between women and health clinics. Community health workers can easily communicate with the nearest health facility, and simple voice calls and smart text messaging systems can increase access to emergency transport as well as obstetric and neonatal care. Similar examples can be found in the education sector, banking and access to credit.

- We also know that Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) has huge potential to drive productivity and raise incomes. To ensure access to technological know-how for local firms and enterprises is fundamental to shaping their ability to provide products and services. These are essential to improve living standards and promote growth and competitiveness.
- Indeed, Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) empowers citizens, giving voice to the voiceless, and facilitates the free flow of information. In other words, it promotes social equality.
- By ensuring access of citizens to public information, we can ensure greater transparency and accountability for governments.
- On the whole, Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) has the potential to offer invaluable contributions to the post 2015 development agenda but it must be supported by other factors and enablers. Its benefits are tremendous including improvements in health care delivery, access to education, energy efficiency, civic participation, and public safety.
- We believe Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) is a fundamental requirement to achieving sustainable development, and should be recognized as such. Inequality in access and opportunity however persists, not only among regions but within regions and countries as well.

- There is a therefore, a pressing need to expand access and improve connectivity
- The continued committed participation of all stakeholders in the design of the Post-2015 development agenda is therefore critical to underscore the relevance of technology to achieving sustainable development. Harnessing science, technology and innovation should be central in areas ranging from information and communications technology to transportation, the environment and life-saving medicines.
- The continued committed participation of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development in the design of the Post-2015 development agenda is therefore critical to underscore the relevance of technology to achieving sustainable development. Harnessing science, technology and innovation should be central in areas ranging from information and communications technology to transportation, the environment and life-saving medicines

Process Update

- Now is the time to step up our efforts, strengthen the necessary partnerships and collectively confront the persistent challenges people and the planet have been facing. Only in this way will we be able to build a more secure, resilient, just and sustainable future for all.

- At the Special Event on the MDGs at the UN General Assembly held on September 25th. Heads of State and Government agreed on the roadmap toward the Summit in 2015 and decided to launch a process of intergovernmental negotiations a year earlier in September 2014.
- The Open Working Group on SDGs and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing Strategy (IECSDF) are both expected to finalize their work by September 2014.
- There will also be a series of “Structured Dialogues” at General Assembly to consider possible arrangements for a facilitation mechanism to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies. Member States are expected to discuss options to address the technology needs of developing countries and to promote capacity-building.
- There is a shared understanding among the Member States that SDGs should be action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account the different national reality, capacities and levels of development.
- Now is the time for all stakeholders to work together and support Member States to realize the post-2015 development agenda which will reinforce the international community’s commitment to poverty eradication and transformational challenges of sustainable development.

- The UN Global Compact continues its mobilization of the private sector towards architecture for business engagement in the Post-2015, while the Sustainable Development Solutions Network continues to tap into the scientific and academic community for cutting edge solutions to Sustainable Development. The UNDG-led consultations will continue to play a role to bring the voices at the national level into the debate in New York. These are all channels that would be important to push the message as well as the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD).
- The High Level Political Forum (HLPF) is expected to play a central role in the institutional framework of sustainable development and in the future review and follow-up of the post-2015 development agenda. Therefore, the upcoming Ministerial meeting in July will be the important venue where the forum must establish itself as an effective UN platform on sustainable development.

Conclusion

- Ladies and Gentlemen – Ours is the first generation with the resources and know-how to irreversibly end poverty by putting our planet on a sustainable development course before it is too late
- I believe that today's meeting provides a great opportunity to renew our engagement in contributing to agenda setting processes. I wish you a fruitful discussion.
- Thank you very much for your attention.