

**Statement by  
Mr. Andrew Reynolds  
Chair of the Commission on Science and  
Technology for Development**

**Commission on Science and Technology for  
Development**

**Seventeenth session**

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*Excellencies,*

*Distinguished delegates,*

*Dear colleagues,*

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

It is a great honor for me to welcome you to the Seventeenth Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD).

May I offer a particular welcome to the distinguished Ministers who have joined us to share your insights about the important work of the United Nations in the fields of science, technology and innovation and the information and communications technologies that are so powerfully helping to close the technical and digital divides that remain in the world today.

In keeping with its original mandate, the CSTD has come to be recognized as the torchbearer for science, technology and innovation for development in the UN system. In this capacity, the Commission focuses on key trends in the evolution and diffusion of science and technology, including information and communications technologies, and the great leverage they provide to human and physical capacity-building and the innovation that flows from these assets. In

this role, the Commission identifies the related needs of developing countries, collects and promotes good practices, facilitates dialogue and exchange of lessons learned, and proposes suitable next steps to foster a more inclusive STI and ICTs environment.

As a second and comparatively newer mandate, since 2006 the CSTD has assisted the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the UN system-wide follow up for review and assessment of progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. An annual progress report from the Secretary General has been provided for you and the theme of WSIS follow-up is the subject of the entire third day of our meeting.

Every year, the CSTD is also responsible for preparing draft resolutions on these two mandates for consideration by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

At the sixteenth annual Session in June 2013, the CSTD recommended to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) the adoption of two draft resolutions: one on “Science, technology and innovation for development,” and one on “Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society” (WSIS). I am pleased to report that the ECOSOC unanimously adopted both resolutions presented by the CSTD, and that the General Assembly, at its 68<sup>th</sup> session, adopted resolutions on Science, technology and innovation for

development and on Information and communication technologies for development as well. The records of these meetings and resolutions have been sent to all CSTD members and stakeholders over the course of past six months and have been posted online by the Secretariat for your convenience.

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

This annual session of the Commission has a rich agenda including, in particular, discussion of two priority themes identified last year, the aforementioned follow up to WSIS, including a progress report from the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, and STI and ICT issues related to the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Draft reports about our two priority themes for this Session – the first on “Science, technology and innovation for the Post-2015 Development Agenda”, and the second on “ICTs for inclusive social and economic development”, were prepared by the Secretariat and explored in depth at the CSTD Intercessional Panel which took place in Washington, D.C., December 2-4, 2013. Participants and panels of experts provided deeper insights about the themes. Based on these deliberations, the Secretary General has conveyed two excellent final papers for your examination and to help facilitate discussion this week.

The first paper begins by taking stock of Commission contributions over the last decade to support the Millennium Development Goals, followed by an

assessment of how STI can contribute to addressing key challenges in the post-2015 development agenda. This is a timely contribution because there is a growing recognition that STI have critical roles to play beyond just research, industrial cooperation and economic growth. They have also been seminal to eradicating poverty, providing better food security, nutrition, potable water and public health - among many other critical human and environmental needs - and creating jobs. The work of the Commission shows indeed that the role of STI is positive and critical at each and every stage of development.

Appreciation of these trends was demonstrated at last year's ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review, which focused on exploring how STI can contribute to achieving sustainable development and the

Millennium Development Goals. In many fora of the ECOSOC – expert group meetings, including the ECOSOC president’s meeting in November and periodic integration segments in which I have participated as your chairman – as well as General Assembly expert group meetings – science, technology and innovation, as well as ICTs, have been receiving greater attention and are undoubtedly slated for greater prominence in the post-2015 development agenda.

Under our second priority theme for this Session, “ICTs for inclusive social and economic development”, we will explore the impacts and benefits of five emerging trends in ICTs and their policy implications. These are: datafication, big data, cloud computing, Internet of things, and smart

systems. The Secretary General's second report on this theme provides an excellent framework for our discussions and the experts assembled for you this week will provide new insights about these dynamic fields and the major impacts they are having on development.

As you are well aware, the coming year will be a critical period for international cooperation on ICTs for development. Based on ECOSOC and UNGA resolutions, CSTD is responsible to provide a 10-year report on the progress in the implementation of the WSIS action lines as the sequel to the 5-year report it submitted to the UNGA in 2010. In this context, ECOSOC is now deeply engaged in assimilating inputs from all UN organizations and functional commissions across the span of development issues –

climate, food, health, natural resource management, science and technology, and ICTs, among others – to prepare the General Assembly for its deliberations at the 70<sup>th</sup> Session in 2015 about progress on the MDGs. The Assembly will also adopt the new Post-2015 Development Agenda at the 70<sup>th</sup> Session, drawing on these many inputs from ECOSOC, evidence from sources including the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and input from other relevant United Nations processes. This input includes the valuable work and guidance of this Commission provided in its decade-long compilation of priority themes as well as the WSIS 10-year review. We should be proud of this legacy and contribution.

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

I would like to add that the challenges ahead cannot be confined to thinking about 1, 2 or 3 years in the future. To that end, on Tuesday during the first panel discussion, we will hear a presentation about “Global Trends to the Year 2030: Alternative Worlds”, based on a recent report from the U.S. that begins with the world as we know it today and provides possible global trajectories or “megatrends” during the next 15 to 20 years, which undoubtedly will affect the Post-2015 Development Agenda. You will hear about at least three major trends with lasting global impact in the years leading up to 2030: rising incomes and the growth of the global middle class; individual empowerment, particularly through further deployment of ICTs and affordable Internet access; and emerging and disruptive technologies.

I firmly believe that the CSTD should play a role in this context, by becoming a forum for scanning the horizon for future developmental challenges that science, technology and innovation can address, and by presenting venues for strategic thinking on the role of STI and ICTs in shaping developmental outcomes.

The program today provides Ministers the opportunity to provide their perspectives on all of these themes. Ministers, I invite you to participate in the subsequent days of the Session when the issues will be considered in greater detail. Many of you have requested to address these important topics, so we all look greatly forward to your testimony about the key role STI and ICTs are playing in the development process in your countries, particularly as we transition from the MDGs to the post-2015 development agenda.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

Awareness of the key role of STI for development is broadening and deepening throughout the UN community, public and private sectors. Powered by ICTs and increasing Internet access, science, technology and engineering capacity-building, education, and research and business collaboration have accelerated and diffused around the world at astounding speed.

The progress made to achieve ALL the MDGs, including the WSIS targets and action lines, has been nothing short of remarkable over the last decade. However, substantial work remains to be done. We have entered the last phase of work in all UN

organizations to compile and report on this progress and to identify what more can be done to close the technological and digital divides as we transition to the post-2015 development agenda.

As the CSTD has asserted over the past several years, ICTs and the transition to an inclusive Information Society provide unique opportunities to achieve rapid progress in development, including to accelerate the diffusion of science, technology, engineering and innovation capabilities around the world, and also contribute to the achievement of MDGs, including through the WSIS action lines.

*Ladies and gentlemen,*

The annual sessions of the Commission have been an opportunity to exchange and share country experiences and best practices among member States. Since its creation, the Commission has advanced as the torch-bearer of STI for development in the UN system. It has contributed towards the promotion of STI as a key factor in national development, triggering policy debates, and contributing to the global dialogue and advancement of understanding on these issues. And more recently the Commission has demonstrated the powerful role of ICTs and the Internet to leverage and diffuse STI capacity even faster, connecting scientists and engineers, universities and businesses, urban and rural populations woman and the young and old in scale and depth unimaginable 20 years ago,

I therefore hope that the deliberations of this Session will produce constructive proposals that can feed into the work of the ECOSOC and the General Assembly throughout this year as we transition from MDGs to the post-2015 development agenda.

I wish you all a rich and productive Seventeenth Session and I thank you for your continued steadfast support for our work.

And now it is my great pleasure to invite Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to provide his opening statement.