

**INTERSESSIONAL PANEL OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD)**

**Geneva, Switzerland
6-8 November 2017**

**Opening Session: Welcoming Remark to the CSTD 2017-2018 Inter-Sessional Panel
Meeting**

Statement submitted by

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Welcoming Remarks by
Ms. Shamika N. Sirimanne
Director, Division on Technology and Logistics
Head of the CSTD Secretariat

2017-2018 Inter-Sessional Panel Meeting
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Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

In my capacity as Head of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), I would like to warmly welcome you to the 2017-2018 Inter-sessional panel. As you know, CSTD serves as the premier platform in the United Nations for the science-policy discourse. The Commission is also a unique multi-stakeholder, multilateral forum for international cooperation, dialogue, sharing experience and finding common solutions to the most pressing challenges as articulated in SDGs.

In this context, I am delighted to let you know that the collaboration with the CSTD proposed by the Chinese Government during the last CSTD is ready to be operationalized in the coming months. It includes organizing two training workshops in China on STI policy making during 2018. 60 young scientists will be selected to be trained in China from 6 months to one year, and we will also jointly organize several seminars on emerging technologies.

Moving now to this Inter-sessional panel, I am pleased to note that the priority themes for this year's Panel addresses key issues related to some of the Goals of the ambitious 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The first priority theme of the current inter-sessional period is *The role of science, technology and innovation to increase substantially the share of renewable energy by 2030*. Today we will hear about the progress being made in the renewable energy sector,

including the development of solar, wind, hydro, biomass and geothermal energy sources.

The second priority theme that you will be considering tomorrow is *Building digital competencies to benefit from existing and emerging technologies with special focus on gender and youth dimensions*.

Both Issues Papers for this Inter-Sessional panel were prepared by the Secretariat in collaboration with international experts. Most importantly, I would like to thank those member states that contributed to the issues papers through the submission of country case studies. 12 countries¹ provided valuable insights in promoting renewable energy, and 11 countries² shared their experience in building digital competencies. I gratefully acknowledge these contributions.

I am confident that the Issues Papers and your deliberations under both priority themes will enable the Commission to continue to provide foresight on emerging trends in technologies and their developmental impact, with particular attention to emerging and disruptive technologies, such as artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of things. The role of the CSTD will be increasingly critical in articulating policy measures and actions for developing countries, especially least developed countries, in adopting STI as a tool for achieving the SDGs.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On Wednesday, the Inter-Sessional Panel will examine the progress made in the implementation and follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) outcomes at the regional and international levels. I look forward to the discussions on this important topic as well.

¹ Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Kenya, Portugal, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda, and the United States of America.

² Bulgaria, Canada, Germany, Kenya, Latvia, Portugal, South Africa, Turkey, Uganda, United Kingdom, and United States of America

To conclude, I hope that the deliberations of this Inter-Sessional Panel will result in pertinent and pragmatic proposals that can be included in the Secretary General's reports to the Commission. Your proposals as experts will then be taken up by STI Ministers and high-level policy makers at the twenty first session of the Commission in May 2018, and the High-Level Political Forum thereafter in July 2018.

I very much look forward to the productive exchanges in the next three days. The CSTD Secretariat will be at hand to help make the meeting a success.

Thank you.