

DRAFT PROPOSAL on Science and Technology for Development

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft resolution for adoption by the Council

1. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Science and technology for development

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Recognizing the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) as the UN “torch bearer” for science, technology and innovation (STI) for development,

Recognizing the critical role of innovation in maintaining national competitiveness in the global economy and in realizing sustainable development,

Recalling the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit on Information Society (WSIS), which emphasizes the role of science and technology, including information and communication technologies, as vital for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, and *reaffirming* the commitments contained therein, especially support of efforts of developing countries, individually and collectively, to harness new agricultural technologies in order to increase agricultural productivity through environmentally sustainable means¹,

Recalling that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is the Secretariat of the CSTD,

Recalling the work of the CSTD on “Science, technology and engineering for innovation and capacity-building in education and research” and “Development-oriented policies for a socio-economically inclusive information society, including policies relating to access, infrastructure, and an enabling environment”,

Welcoming the work of the CSTD on its two current substantive themes “Technologies to address challenges in areas such as agriculture and water” and “Measuring the impact of information and communications technology for development”

¹ A/60/1, para. 60

Recognizing the important role that Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) play in promoting innovation in Science and Technology for Development,

Recognizing the importance of science, technology and innovation policy (STIP) reviews in assisting developing countries to strengthen their national development plans and improve their innovation systems,

Recalling the Agreed Conclusions² of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology adopted at its 55th session, which *inter alia*, highlighted the need for the sharing of good practice examples in mainstreaming a gender perspective into STI policies and programming, in order to scale up and replicate successes and further the call of the CSW to the CSTD for concrete steps in this respect,

Taking note of the report of the Commission Inter-sessional Panel Meeting held in Geneva in December 2010 and the report prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat contained in document E/CN.16/2011/CRP.1,

Taking note of the reports³ of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development,

Extending its appreciation to the Secretary-General of UNCTAD for his role in helping to complete the aforementioned reports in a timely manner,

Taking note that STI and ICT are essential to raising agricultural productivity, soil, water, and watershed management, particularly to support smallholder farmers,

Noting with concern that there has been a decline of investment in publicly funded agricultural research and development (R&D) in many countries, as well as a decrease in donor support to agricultural research,

Noting further that agricultural research, education and extension services in many countries do not adequately address local, social needs, especially those related to the poor, including smallholder farmers,

Recognizing the key role played by women in agriculture and water management at domestic and farm levels, while *noting* their lack of access to credit, land, knowledge and skills that are essential to raising productivity, and reducing poverty,

² E/CN.6/2011/L.6

³ E/CN.16/2011/3, E/CN.16/2011/2

Recognizing that increased investments in watershed management, agricultural knowledge, water and soil management and science and technology – particularly when complemented by investments in rural development such as infrastructure, telecommunications, and processing facilities – can increase productivity and yield high economic rates of return, reduce poverty, and have positive environmental, social, health, and cultural benefits,

Taking note of the outcome of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), organized in İstanbul, Turkey from 9 to 13 May 2011, the İstanbul Program of Action and the Political Declaration adopted by the Member Countries,

Extending its appreciation to the Turkish Government for its initiative to set up an International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre with a view to helping build the technological capabilities of the least developed countries,

Decides to make the following recommendations for consideration by national Governments, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, and UNCTAD:

(a) *Governments are encouraged to take into account the findings of the Commission and undertake the following actions:*

Review their agricultural science, technology and innovation systems with a view to strengthening policies for more sustainable agricultural practices, particularly for smallholder farmers, while integrating a gender perspective in the design of these policies;

Consider increasing the share and improving the effectiveness of public expenditure for agricultural research and development;

Target public investment towards improving physical and R&D infrastructures (including rural road networks, power and Internet connections, education, training, and health), linkages among farmers, agricultural research, agricultural product processing and marketing, and extension services, supporting sustainable, regenerative production methods;

Review research and education systems to ensure that they adequately address the challenges faced by smallholder farmers to achieve more sustainable agricultural practices;

Encourage participatory research which engages farmers, agricultural workers, especially women, and other stakeholders;

Support sustainable agriculture by introducing mechanisms and policies that prevent land degradation and the overuse of pesticides, fertilizers, water and energy, especially fossil fuels, as well as to consider the health, environmental and social costs of agricultural production processes;

Support research on irrigation and soil improvement technologies, as well as the application of affordable ICTs and other technologies, to lower costs and make agriculture more profitable for smallholder farmers;

Consider improving market access for developing country producers.

(b) The Commission on Science and Technology for Development is encouraged to:

Provide technical and policy support and advice, upon request, on how to strengthen and stimulate innovation in sustainable agricultural and water management systems, including extension services, in collaboration with UNCTAD, FAO, and other relevant international and regional organizations;

Promote an integrated, international, and collaborative approach in these areas, particularly to meet the needs of smallholder farmers;

Promote the exchange, dissemination and diffusion of best practice examples in the area of agricultural science, technology, and innovation and on cooperation between countries in order to face common challenges in matters of science and technology

Facilitate new STIP reviews, as requested by member countries, to emphasize S&T and ICTs to building human capacity and infrastructure to foster innovation in national development plans and programs, in close collaboration with UNESCO, World Bank, other relevant international development banks and institutions, and consider new modalities to monitor progress for their implementation;

In particular, the Commission should identify opportunities and best practices and synergies in and between e-science, e-engineering, and e-education programs worldwide in the course of performing STIP reviews;

Complete and disseminate the new STIP Methodology Guidelines and share outcomes and best practices resulting from their implementation;

Examine new metrics to assess and document outcomes of investments in S&T and engineering R&D, education and infrastructure, in collaboration with UNESCO, World Bank and member countries that have established programs in this field of research.

Continue to provide a forum, in collaboration with its Gender Advisory Board to share good practice examples and lessons learned in integrating a gender perspective in STI policy making and implementation;

Consider on an annual basis, an award, in collaboration with the WSIS World Summit Awards and the International Center for New Media in Austria, for the innovative application of ICTs in fields of science, technology and engineering that support development.

