

**United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)
Twenty-eighth Annual Session**

**Side Event on
Inclusive Artificial Intelligence for Development**

**Monday, 7 April 2025, 14.00-15.00 (Geneva time)
Room XXII, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland**

Concept note

Background

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is reshaping economies and societies, offering significant potential to accelerate sustainable development. However, many developing countries face challenges in harnessing its benefits due to insufficient digital infrastructure, limited data access, and a lack of necessary skills. To bridge the gap with leading economies, developing countries should swiftly implement AI policies to overcome barriers to AI diffusion consistent with their development strategies and goals, while addressing possible economic and social downsides of AI.

The cross-border impacts of AI further highlight the need for global collaboration to make it accessible and beneficial for all, fostering inclusive innovation to tackle global challenges. As AI development is highly concentrated in a few countries and companies, stronger international cooperation is crucial to co-create inclusive governance mechanisms and to ensure AI will drive sustainable progress rather than deepening existing inequalities.

Objective

With reference to UNCTAD's *Technology and Innovation Report 2025*, the event aims to explore ways for countries to strategically position themselves to take advantage of the opportunities offered by AI. The discussion will center around the assessment and design of industrial and innovation policies to support AI adoption, adaptation and development, as well as the importance of strengthened international collaboration to steer AI toward inclusive and equitable development.

Format

The event will begin with a presentation of key messages from UNCTAD's *Technology and Innovation Report 2025: Inclusive Artificial Intelligence for Development*. Then panelists will provide feedback, discuss country experiences, and make suggestions on how to take the report's recommendations forward, followed by an interactive discussion among panelists and participants.

Agenda

Welcoming remarks

- Mr. Antonio Vezzani, Economic Affairs Officer, Technology and Innovation Policy Research Section, UNCTAD

Presentation of UNCTAD's *Technology and Innovation Report 2025* (10 minutes)

- Mr. Wai Kit Si Tou, Economic Affairs Officer, Technology and Innovation Policy Research Section, UNCTAD

Panel discussion (25 minutes)

Panellists:

- H.E. Muhammadou M.O. Kah, Ambassador of Gambia and Chairman of the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development
- Mr. Ashutosh Chadha, Senior Director UN Affairs and International Organisations at Microsoft
- Ms. Marie Humeau, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Conference on Disarmament
- Mr. Leandro Santos Texeira, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Brazil to the WTO and other Economic Organizations (TBC)

Interactive discussion (20 minutes)