

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

**Geneva, Switzerland
17-19 November 2021**

Opening Session: CSTD 2021-2022 Inter-Sessional Panel Meeting

Welcoming remarks by

Shamika N. Sirimanne
Director, Division on Technology and Logistics (DTL)
and Head of the CSTD Secretariat, UNCTAD

DISCLAIMER: The views presented here are the contributors' and do not necessarily reflect the views and position of the United Nations or the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

CSTD Intersessional panel, 17-19 November

Opening Remarks by the Head of the CSTD Secretariat

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

- I join our Chair and the Deputy Secretary-General in welcoming you to this Intersessional Panel of the CSTD.
- Let me begin by thanking member States for the important contributions they have submitted for the issue papers.
- Since the twenty fourth annual session of the Commission UNCTAD has continued to work to support developing countries in harnessing science, technology and innovation for development:
 - UNCTAD's Technology and Innovation Report 2021 discusses the relationship between frontier technologies and inequality. We have organized a series of webinars to disseminate the key findings and recommendations of the Report in cooperation with Regional Commissions, civil society organizations, academia and other stakeholders, and with the participation of over 300 policymakers and practitioners.
 - Our project on Technology Assessment in Africa, which aims to build capacity in African countries to undertake technology assessments is now operational. Three countries have joined the project – South Africa, the Seychelles and Zambia. The first national workshop on technology assessment was held in South Africa earlier this month.
 - We have provided a final draft of the STIP Review to our partners in Zambia and will be submitting the Review for publishing before year-end. We have also produced a draft STI Policy for Uganda as a follow-up to last year's STIP Review. We are progressing on the STIP Review of Botswana, relying on virtual communications platforms.

- We are leading the workstream on capacity building of the UN’s Technology Facilitation Mechanism. We continue our close collaboration with DESA as co-conveners of the IATF, on the support to the STI Forum and to the 10 Member Group of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.
- The CropWatch Innovative Cooperation Programme in collaboration with China is facilitating agricultural monitoring through satellite data in the developing countries. In May 2021, 24 participants from 12 participating countries concluded a two-month training program on the CropWatch monitoring system. Starting this month and going through June 2022, the program will undertake fieldwork in several developing countries.
- The Young Female Scientist Programme that we organize with the University of Okayama in Japan continues to accept candidates to engage in cutting-edge joint research activities. We will start a call for applications in November for the 2022 school year.
- CSTD collaboration with China on capacity building continued with a joint UNCTAD-China training workshop on “National Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy and Policy for Sustainable Development” held virtually in October with 25 participants from 22 countries.
- This meeting comes at a critical juncture for the world, as we face a confluence of global challenges that we must work together collectively to overcome.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic continues to threaten everyone. Global scientific collaboration has succeeded amazingly in providing solutions in terms of developing effective vaccines. But the deployment of vaccines globally remains highly uneven, and we are still failing to reach the most vulnerable quickly enough in most countries. We must do better with vaccination rates across countries.
 - COP 26 has vividly brought to our attention the need for concerted global action to combat climate change. A global energy crisis illustrates the need to make much faster progress on the deployment of renewable and clean energy. The effects are global and the effort required from us also has to be global. STI must be central in this effort.
 - Progress towards the SDGs has been set back by the COVID-19 pandemic. More than ever the world needs greater global cooperation and solidarity, and the faster deployment of both old and new STI solutions to help meet multiple global and national

challenges and improve the lives of people. The topics of Industry 4 and sustainable urban development that we will discuss over these days intersect in important ways with these various challenges.

- I wish you a productive inter-sessional panel.

Thank you.