Draft

Address by Getachew Engida,

Deputy Director-General of UNESCO

on the occasion of the opening of the *Commission*

on Science and Technology for Development

Geneva, 12 May 2014

Dr Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of the *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*,

Dr Hamadoun Touré, Secretary-General of the *International Telecommunication Union*,

Professor Rolf-Dieter Heuer, Director-General of the *European Council for Nuclear Research*,

Mr Andrew Reynolds, Chair of the CSTD,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the UNESCO Director-General, Ms Irina Bokova, I wish to thank Dr Mukhisa Kituyi and Mr Andrew Reynolds for the invitation to speak at the opening of the *Commission on Science and Technology for Development.*

This Commission meets at a special time.

This is a time of rising pressure on the planet.

This is a time when we are reaching the limits of development as it has been understood until now, when societies are transforming, increasingly connected and increasingly fragile.

We all recognise the deepening interdependence of the world.

The question we must answer is whether we will make this interdependence a source of strength or a factor of division.

All countries share a *single* destiny – can we act with *single* determination to craft the future we want for all?

This is the question being addressed as countries accelerate towards the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and as the international community shapes a new sustainable development agenda to follow.

Our goals are clear – to eradicate poverty, to craft inclusive, knowledge societies, where every woman and man is empowered to create knowledge from information and contribute fully to society.

Pathways to

Science, technology and innovation is essential to achieving this vision.

STI is essential for the creation of knowledge.

It is essential for economic growth.

It is essential for the sustainability of all development.

Alone, technology is not enough -- to empower, science and technology must be married with skills and opportunities, for all.

We cannot just invest in science and in technology -- we need to invest in ecosystems.

This is UNESCO's vision, guiding our action.

This vision led UNESCO to host the first *WSIS+10 Review Event* "Towards Knowledge Societies, for peace and sustainable development" -- co-organized with ITU, UNDP and UNCTAD in Paris in February 2013.

WSIS+10 brought together 1450 participants from 130 countries, including high-level government officials and world-renowned experts, for 83 sessions covering all issues relevant for building Knowledge Societies.

The Review Event adopted a Final Statement, *Information and Knowledge for All: An Expanded Vision and a Renewed Commitment*, endorsed at the 37th UNESCO General Conference. This is a major contribution to the 2015 WSIS Review, which I hope this Commission will recognize its in Resolution.

Let me also draw your attention to the UNESCO Review Report on WSIS+10, exploring achievements, shortcomings and ways forward.

There is increasing recognition of the importance of science, technology and innovation for the post-2015

development agenda, but we need to move from recognition to action.

We need *more integrated* science -- trans-disciplinary, drawing on the full range of scientific, traditional and indigenous knowledge, including the social and human sciences.

We need *more connected* science – science that is linked to policy-making, that responds to the needs and aspirations of societies.

This is the goal of the *Scientific Advisory Board*, launched in Berlin this January, whose secretariat is hosted by UNESCO -- to provide advice on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development to the Secretary-General and Executive Heads of UN organizations.

We need to strengthen national capacities in science, technology and innovation, and this is why UNESCO is working with over 20 countries in Africa to create national STI systems.

Most fundamentally, we need to create cultures of innovation.

This is why education is so important, along with support to R&D entities, and stronger partnerships with the private sector.

We need more and better education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and greater support to career opportunities.

Sub-Saharan African alone needs over 2.5 million new engineers and technicians to reach the Millennium Development Goal of improved access to clean water and sanitation...

We cannot decree innovation, but we can create conditions for it to flourish.

This is why gender equality is so vital.

This is an issue of human rights -- it is also a breakthrough strategy for sustainable development.

Inclusion is essential for innovation.

We need also a 'data revolution,' in the words of the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel last year – here again, UNESCO has a key role to play,

to strengthen capacities to access, use and produce data and knowledge, drawing on solid information and data.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

UNESCO is bringing its experience to all processes underway to shape the post-2015 development agenda -- through the *UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda*, including its sub-working groups, through the *UN Development Group MDG Task Force*, through the *UN Development Group Task Force on Culture and Development,* through *Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators.*

Science, technology, and innovation must lie at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda, and this requires will and action from Governments, from UN agencies, from the scientific community, from civil society, from the private sector.

This same vision underpins the *Joint Statement on the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, adopted by the United Nations Group on the Information Society last year, under the chairmanship of UNESCO and co-chairs, UNDP, ITU, UNCTAD and UNDESA.

This Statement reflects the shared view of 30 UN agencies, to direct all their expertise in the field of information and communication technologies to support Governments in reaching their development objectives.

Member States, indeed, are the drivers of this process, and that is the importance of this *Commission on Science and Technology for Development*, to support States and societies in making the most of the transformational power of science, technology and innovation for more inclusive, sustainable development for all.

I look forward to the conclusions of you discussions.

Thank you.