

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-second session  
Geneva, 13-17 May 2019**

**High-level roundtable on “The impact of rapid technological change on  
sustainable development”**

Statement submitted by  
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

**Tuesday, 14 May 2019**

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**Commission on Science and Technology for Development  
Twenty-Second Annual Session, 13–17 May 2019**

**Agenda Item 3  
Interactive Exchange following High-level Roundtable on “The  
impact of rapid technological change on sustainable  
development”**

**Statement by Pakistan**

**Mr. Chair,  
Distinguished colleagues,**

We thank the distinguished panelists for their insightful presentations. We also thank the Secretariat for its Report on this important issue and Director Sirimanne for presentation of the Report yesterday.

Due to the paucity of time, I would restrict myself to making few points.

Science, technology and innovation can prove instrumental in realization of Sustainable Development Goals. We see the operative word here is 'can', which means that without prioritization and appropriate rules, policies and conducive environment at all levels, the dividends of technological advancements would remain limited. Reaping full potential of science and technology will require active intervention by governments with the engagement of all stakeholders and backed by appropriate international support and cooperation.

What is less clear is to the extent rapid technological change in science and technology especially so-called frontier or disruptive technologies can either transform or disrupt economic and social functions. This questions becomes even more imperative for developing countries who already lack better scientific and technological base.

One of the major challenges facing governments is not the technological advancement itself as humans and government departments are normally used to innovate, prepare for and get benefit from changing nature of technology. However, more unsettling is the speed of technological

development affecting human adjustment and government machinery to respond appropriately with policies and legislation.

Technological advancement is also often characterized as the “democratization of opportunity” - most so in the realm of digital technologies. Whilst ICTs have surely opened up vast number of opportunities and unlocked potential for individuals and communities, they are far from equalizing the playing field for all. Even setting aside the notion of “digital divide” for a moment, the foremost question here is how much actual economic benefit is being accrued from these technologies and by whom.

**I thank you.**