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**Using science, technology and innovation to close the gap on Sustainable
Development Goal 3, good health and well-being**

Introduction of the Report of the Secretary-General by the CSTD Secretariat

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"High-level roundtable on using science, technology and innovation to close the gap on Sustainable Development Goal 3, on good health and well-being"

Statement by:

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Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to present the Report of the Secretary-General under this agenda item.

We received valuable contributions from twenty-five member States and international organizations. We reflected them in the SG's report, and full case studies are available on the CSTD website.

The CSTD has consistently emphasized that science, technology and innovation (STI) are essential for sustainable development, especially the SDG 3 on good health and well-being.

In these challenging times, a whole range of COVID-19-related interventions clearly illustrated the importance of STI -- from genome mapping, diagnostics, contact tracing applications and disease monitoring to treatment and vaccine. Vaccine development typically used to take a decade or longer. However, using breakthrough technologies, researchers and pharmaceutical companies developed COVID-19 vaccines at a remarkable speed in less than a year.

The digital technologies have shown enormous potential and promise. Telemedicine, remote care and mobile health, including the home monitoring of vital signs and medication adjustments, have reduced costs and improved safety in healthcare

delivery. The application of big data and artificial intelligence are enabling complex clinical decision-making and the identification and reporting of health emergencies. Finally, developing medical and assistive devices and services, such as 3-D printing, have revolutionized the manufacture of devices and equipment.

It is predicted that the digitalization of healthcare, which was accelerated during this pandemic, will completely change this sector in the next ten years.

However, healthcare innovation ecosystems that are essential in adapting these technologies to local conditions face enormous challenges in developing countries. Innovation systems lack enabling policies, funding, skills, physical infrastructure, ICTs, and more. Internet access is a key infrastructure for digital health, but it also requires reliable electricity access. SG's report calls for a whole of government and multisectoral approach to ensure that STI policies are consistent with national health priorities and sustainable development strategies.

While the focus is, righty so, on the COVID-19 pandemic, we should not forget about other diseases that disproportionately affect poor people especially in developing countries. The number one leading cause of death in low-income countries is neonatal conditions, with diarrheal diseases, malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS in the top ten.[1] As the Secretary General's report highlights, every year more than 5 million children die before the age of 5 due to preventable or treatable diseases.

As witnessed during this pandemic, when the international community comes together, solutions can be found for global health challenges in record time. We need

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[1] See: WHO (2020). The top 10 causes of death.

to use this moment in time to bring attention to other critical diseases and develop affordable vaccines, treatments and innovative delivery methods.

International STI collaboration should be based on equitable relations between the partners involved, including when it comes to intellectual property rights. The report outlines several flexible approaches that can be adopted to ensure this, including the issue of licenses (either paid or unpaid), patent pools, voluntary pledges, waivers of intellectual property right barriers or enabling open access for scientific collaboration during global health challenges. The report also identifies other areas where international collaboration is needed as the health sector is transformed by digital technologies. These include privacy and data protection, cyber security, and ethical frameworks for frontier technologies such as AI, and gene editing. Ladies and gentlemen,

In conclusion, Secretary General calls for a more equitable access to scientific knowledge and technologies to close the gap on SDG 3, good health and well-being. Strengthening national innovation systems, promoting international cooperation and a commitment to global solidarity are critical enablers for ensuring that heath care technologies are accessible for all.

Thank you.