

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT (CSTD), twenty-fifth session
Geneva, 28 March - 1 April 2022**

**The role of science, technology and innovation in building back better from
the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation
of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Statement submitted by

H.E. Mr. Fortunato de la Peña
Secretary (Minister), Department of Science and Technology
The Philippines

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**United Nations Commission on Science and Technology
for Development (CSTD)
Twenty-fifth annual session**

**HIGH-LEVEL ROUNDTABLE ON
“THE ROLE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND INNOVATION IN
BUILDING BACK BETTER FROM THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE
(COVID-19) WHILE ADVANCING THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”**

28 March 2022 | 08:30-10:30 PM, Manila time
14:30-16:30 (CEST/Geneva time)

Statement to be delivered by

FORTUNATO T. DE LA PEÑA
Secretary (Minister)
Department of Science and Technology

On behalf of the

Republic of the Philippines

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Only two years ago, the world was struck with the unprecedented COVID-19 outbreak. Everything was uncertain, but through science, experts from around the world were able to rapidly study the virus, understand its behavior, produce vaccines, and develop policies and programs that address the short- to long-term impact of the pandemic. We have harnessed science, technology, and innovation to respond and recover.

Unfortunately, the pandemic also exacerbated the inequalities and exposed the vulnerabilities in our systems.

Mr. Chair,

- (1) The Philippines builds on **research and development** and facilities that cater to the needs of the society. The country's Department of Science and Technology is at the forefront in the legislation of the **Virology and Vaccine Institute of the Philippines (VIP)** to ensure vaccine security in the country and in the development of vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics.

- (2) The Philippines gives value in **supporting various institutions and start-ups** that develop beneficial technologies and life-saving equipment.
- (3) Universities and medical centers are being strengthened by building relevant R&D Centers across the country through the Department's Niche Centers in the Regions for R&D (NICER) Program.
- (4) To revitalize the economy, governments may help in rebuilding the market by **assisting micro-, small-, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)**. In the field of STI, the Department continuously helps the local MSMEs to improve their competitiveness through its **Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program** in terms of technology upgrading, human capital development and strengthening of innovation capability.
- (5) It is high time to **make technologies more available and accessible to everyone** through resilient infrastructure and inclusive policies and programs.

Excellencies,

The Philippines believes that achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and recovering from the pandemic requires a whole-of-nation approach.

To move forward, the international community must provide an enabling environment for technology-based enterprises to flourish. There must be a

safe space for collaboration among countries with diverse stakeholders, and the CSTD is one such platform.

Excellencies,

Foresight, strong partnerships, and a just framework will safeguard us from future crises. To ensure that no one will be left behind, we must stand by each other with the aim of building back better.

Thank you.