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**The role of science, technology, and innovation in reinforcing the 2030 Agenda
and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of
sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions**

Statement by

The Gambia

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies, and gentlemen,

As we gather for the 27th CSTD, we are confronted with the stark reality of a world grappling with multiple crises, threatening to derail our progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The theme of this forum, "Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions," underscores the urgency of our task.

In this context, the role of science, technology, and innovation (STI) becomes paramount. STI has the potential to deliver sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, particularly Goals 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17. However, for many, especially the poor, the promise of STI remains unfulfilled. It is imperative that we bridge this gap and harness the full potential of STI for sustainable development.

Developing countries face significant challenges in giving Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) the recognition and priority it deserves in their national agendas. Unlike countries in East Asia that have demonstrated the transformative potential of STI, many developing countries still treat STI as a peripheral rather than a central component of their development strategies. This is often due to a dichotomy in government policymaking, where Ministries of Finance & Economic Affairs champion national development planning while Ministries of STI are relegated to the status of a sub-socioeconomic sector, often linked to higher education and human capital development. This often determines resource allocations and hence the often widely reported resource constraints of STI systems in several developing countries.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) can play a crucial role in helping developing countries give Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) the recognition it deserves in their national agendas. This can be achieved through advocacy and awareness campaigns to highlight the transformative potential of STI, capacity building initiatives to strengthen STI governance and policy-making capabilities, and policy support to mainstream STI into national development plans. Additionally, UNCTAD can facilitate partnerships and innovation ecosystem development to enhance access to technology, expertise, and financial resources. These efforts can help developing countries leverage STI for sustainable development, following the example of successful models in East Asia.

On the other hand, the capitalist tendencies of advanced economies have often limited access to technologies for developing nations. This is primarily due to stringent intellectual property

rights protection regimes, which can make technologies unaffordable or legally challenging to access. Market dynamics in advanced economies may also prioritize profits over equitable access to technologies, leading to high prices that are prohibitive for many developing countries. Additionally, barriers such as regulatory constraints further exacerbate the challenge of accessing technologies, particularly in the digital sphere.

UNCTAD can address these barriers by promoting technology transfer agreements that ensure equitable access to technologies at affordable prices. They can also support capacity building in developing countries to enhance their technological capabilities and advocate for the reform of intellectual property rights regimes to make them more equitable. Furthermore, UNCTAD can work towards bridging the digital divide by supporting initiatives that increase access to digital technologies and infrastructure. By facilitating partnerships between advanced and developing countries and advocating for inclusive policies, UNCTAD can contribute to addressing global challenges and promoting inclusive and sustainable development.

It is imperative therefore to strengthen UNCTAD's current resolve to facilitate knowledge-sharing and capacity-building initiatives, helping countries avoid pitfalls and accelerate progress towards the SDGs. In doing so, UNCTAD can strengthen global STI cooperation by fostering partnerships and collaborations, catalysing innovation, and accelerating the development of sustainable solutions. UNCTAD and its partners must also advocate for policies that incentivize investment in STI, creating an enabling environment for STI-led development.

In conclusion, the challenges we face are immense, but so too are the opportunities. By harnessing the power of STI and working together in solidarity, we can overcome these challenges and achieve the 2030 Agenda. Let us seize this moment and reflect on building a sustainable, resilient, and innovative future for all.

Thank you.