

## **United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD)**

**21st Annual Session, 14-18 May 2018**

### **High-level Session on "*The role of science, technology and innovation in supporting sustainable and resilient societies*"**

#### **Concept Note**

During the twenty-first annual session of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), a High-level Session will be held on the morning of 14 May 2018, with the theme of *The role of science, technology and innovation in supporting sustainable and resilient societies*. The Commission will contribute to the High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) convened in July 2018 which will explore the aforementioned theme and conduct an in-depth review of the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 6 (clean water and sanitation), Goal 7 (affordable and clean energy), Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities), Goal 12 (responsible consumption and production), Goal 15 (life on land) and Goal 17 (partnership for the goals).

Science, technology and innovation (STI) has a key role in supporting sustainable and resilient societies. Cities around the world are already using frontier technologies like artificial intelligence and Internet of Things enabled technologies to improve water and energy management, transportation systems and public safety. Renewable energy technologies, such as off-grid solutions can provide an increasing share of electricity, as well as clean and sustainable energy in rural areas. Foresight techniques, such as big data analysis can help policy makers to identify trends and support planning. Information and communication technologies are widely being used to deliver first-response emergency aid, as well as to share information.

Against this context, the session will identify ways to prioritize science, technology and innovation as part of national development strategies to achieve the SDGs. In particular, it will provide an opportunity for high-level policymakers to exchange experiences, lessons learned and best practices in applying STI in achieving the sets of SDGs to be reviewed under this theme by ECOSOC.

The following are questions to guide the discussion:

- Which new scientific, technological and innovative applications (including technologies related to Goals 6,7,11,15 and 17 as well as information and communication technologies) should be a priority in terms of their potential for building sustainable and resilient societies?
- How can we prioritize STI in national development strategies to achieve the SDGs (especially Goals 6,7,11,15 and 17)? How can STI be adapted to local socio-economic conditions and engage with indigenous knowledge?
- How can technology assessment and foresight help countries evaluate technologies to enhance the resilience of communities and future trends for planning?
- What are the actions that the international community, including the CSTD, can take to leverage STI for sustainable and resilient societies in the context of the SDGs?

#### **Format of the High-level Session:**

Following a brief introduction by the Chair, high-level participants will make their initial interventions (3-5 minutes), broadly addressing the guiding questions. After this the Chair will initiate an interactive discussion among the participants, including those from the floor.