



Opening Statement
22nd session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development
H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King
President of the Economic and Social Council
13 May 2019

*Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

As President of the Economic and Social Council, I am honored to address the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD).

Science, technology and innovation (STI) are cross-cutting issues pertinent to all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the United Nations focal point for STI for development, the CSTD has a key role in providing high-level advice on the opportunities and challenges raised by STI and the actions needed to ensure that STI benefits all humanity.

It is also complementary to the work of the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism, launched in September 2015 through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I am privileged to be convening, under this mechanism, the annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs. I attach importance to building links between those two mechanisms by ECOSOC.

This year, the theme of ECOSOC and the high-level political forum on sustainable development is “Empowering people and ensuring inclusivity and equality”. In our interconnected world, STI empower people in many ways. STI can give voice to people and connect them. STI can extend access to education, health and other basic services, including for those who are most vulnerable. STI is also a driver for economic growth and can create jobs and increase real incomes. Your discussions will help unpack how STI can best serve as enablers for the SDGs under review at HLPF this year, as well as build resilient communities¹.

The gains from rapid technological change are not automatic. Therefore, we need to think about the right policies to maximize its benefits and reduce its negative effects. I am very

¹ See UNCTAD (2019), Report of the Secretary General: [The role of science, technology and innovation in building resilient communities, including through the contribution of citizen science](#).

pleased that the CSTD is exploring the impact of rapid technological change on sustainable development as one of its priority themes this year.²

The world needs to make sense of the rapid technological change of our age, to develop common frameworks for cooperation and to provide guidance to fast technological change so that it brings fair progress for all humanity. The UN and ECOSOC should be central players in this effort. I commend CSTD for continuing to be a leading voice in advocating for technological foresight in STI policy. We also need a forum like the CSTD to engage in a joint reflection about the policy responses needed, and the common values that should underpin those policies, to benefit from the opportunities and address the challenges of frontier technologies for sustainable development.

I wish you a fruitful discussion and a successful session.

² See UNCTAD (2019), Report of the Secretary General: [The impact of rapid technological change on sustainable development](#).