



ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

Transcript

Global Online Dialogue Series

‘Technological and Science-based Solutions to the COVID-19 Challenge’

Introductory remarks by

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I am pleased to join this important global online dialogue on technological and science solutions to the COVID-19 challenge.

It is the availability and the applicability of advanced technologies, especially digital and communication technology, which have enabled the world to function and communicate during this pandemic.

This is also technology, which enabled us to resort to testing and tracing in order to control the virus.

And it is again science, which has been mobilized to deliver and develop a vaccine against the virus, which we hope will be available to us soon and in record time.

I believe that if we are to build back better from the wreckage of the COVID crisis and accelerate the realization of the SDGs and climate goals the application and absorption of new technologies. And in the development paradigm it is indispensable indeed imperative.

It is indeed science and technology solutions that provide us with enormous opportunities to leapfrog the developing countries into a modern and advanced

development. If we are to succeed in realizing this objective, it is essential that the proofs of scientific research should be fully and universally available to ensure that no one is left behind.

The DESA's recent policy brief, the science, technology society interface, put forward recommendations that would strengthen the contribution of Science, Technology and Innovation towards the COVID-19 recovery and advancing the SDG.

As President of ECOSOC, I am convening commission on science and technology for development and I have suggested that this year we will focus on three priorities:

First, there is the need to align the intellectual property regime, with the SDGs. Proposals have been made for IP exemptions for COVID-19 and health related technologies and IP protected products.

I would propose to go a bit further and to review thousands of patents, which identify a number of technologies – some of these technologies, existing and emerging technologies, could be especially important in advancing the SDG goals.

Secondly, I have proposed that the scientific communities should be directed and mobilized to identify those scientific and technological breakthroughs that are necessary to advance the SDGs rather than scientific research to be determined by multinational corporations and industry.

It should be the objectives of the SDGs, which should motivate scientific and technological research in order to promote sustainable development.

Thirdly, the Secretary General has proposed a roadmap for digital cooperation. I believe that progress on this is essential to avoid turning the digital divide into a development divide.

One of the areas of focus for the upcoming STI forum under ECOSOC will be on how to close the digital divide, looking specifically at improving infrastructure and the capacity to work with stakeholders to develop digital applications.

I acknowledge the strong and robust process to advance the STI roadmaps for the SDGs and related capacity building initiatives, led by the UN interagency task

team on science, technology and innovation and the internal member group to support the technology facilitation mechanism.

You may also note that the UN online technology platform, 2030 Connect was recently launched during the 2020 high level political forum. So the work on technologies discussed today is highly relevant to the work of the ECOSOC.

I look forward to a continuation of today's discussion in the lead up to the STI forum, and the high level political forum on sustainable development, including our COVID-19 response and recovery.

I thank you.
