

CLOSING REMARKS

BY

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PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC)**

AT THE

**7TH MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY
AND INNOVATION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

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**CONFERENCE ROOM 2
UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
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- **Excellencies,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. I wish to thank you all for this highly engaging and stimulating two days of discussions and interactions. Your insights and contributions have created new momentum for realizing the potential of Science, Technology and Innovation to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. This STI Forum was timely as it provided an opportunity to help find solutions to a number of overlapping challenges the world is facing today, ranging from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to the ever more present impact of climate change, as well as the global economic consequences of the war in Ukraine.
3. As you know, these crises have been stopping or reversing years of development progress in many countries, threatening to put the SDGs out of reach, and to trigger a lost decade for developing countries.

4. Innovative solutions based on Science, Technology and Innovation, like the ones presented at this Forum, are therefore needed more than ever. They can contribute to an inclusive and resilient recovery and support the achievement of the SDGs.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

5. These last two days have shown us the huge potential offered by STI for realizing the SDGs. We have also learned about specific policies and tools needed to harness this transformative potential.
6. We have seen how STI can support gender equality in education and other areas. We have heard examples of innovations used to strengthen access to healthcare, education and finance for the most vulnerable populations.
7. We have also seen the important role that STI is playing in fighting the pandemic.

8. We are also all aware of the crucial contributions that STI is making in our effort to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to achieve the transition towards a low-carbon economy.
9. But we have also heard about dangers and fears associated with STI, and how to address them; especially, how to ensure that technology can be harnessed safely, ethically, and with respect for human rights.
10. Above all, we have heard what needs to happen to strengthen the positive impact of Science, Technology and Innovation in developing countries. This includes bridging the digital divide, enhancing digital literacy, strengthening national technology, science and innovation systems, breaking down gender barriers, and harnessing greater international cooperation and solidarity.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

11. Before closing, allow me to make some brief observations from my vantage point as President of ECOSOC.
12. The STI forum is serving a crucial function in bringing together a variety of stakeholders beyond Member States – including the private sector, the scientific community, and civil society - all of whom play a key role in utilizing STI to advance the SDGs.
13. In this context, I am pleased to see the growing dialogue and exchange between the STI Forum and the Commission for Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), the ECOSOC subsidiary body mandated to address policy-issues to better leverage Science and Technology for Sustainable Development.
14. As part of our discussion on broadening the impact of the TFM, I welcome the proposal to consider strengthening the feedback loops, learning, and institutional linkages between the multistakeholder Forum and the intergovernmental body, in the context

of the ongoing deliberations on the review of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies.

15. Secondly, we are witnessing an unprecedented growth in the role of digital technology in the global economy, which offers significant opportunities to help address the SDGs, but also poses important risks.
16. In this vein, I note the recent observation of Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy that “efforts at the international level are needed to address these interconnected challenges, with an emphasis on finding common principles and objectives, to maximize the gains of the digital economy and digitalization, ensure an equitable distribution of the gains, and minimize the risks involved.”
17. This should also include greater efforts to assist developing countries, and LDCs in particular, to close the digital divide and build their capacities to benefit from the digital economy.

18. A third element relates to funding. To date, the TFM, including this STI Forum, has not received dedicated financial support, which is limiting the scope of its operations.
19. The IATT and its 10 work streams, for example, are mandated to promote coordination within the UN System on STI related matters, enhancing synergy and efficiency, particularly on capacity-building initiatives. Since their inception in 2017, the work streams have been carrying out very useful work, including holding online trainings on STI policy design for more than **500** policymakers, and producing a Guidebook on preparing STI for SDG roadmaps.
20. However, scaling up these efforts is hampered by the lack of dedicated funding. This is an issue that should be addressed going forward.

Excellencies,

21. As we bring this 7th edition of the STI Forum to a close, allow me to express my sincere appreciation to

the distinguished Co-Chairs, Ambassador Kennedy Godfrey Gastorn of Tanzania, and Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya of Ukraine for their leadership and support in the preparation and organization of this Forum.

22. I look forward to their summary of the discussions, which will serve as an input to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) to be held in July.
23. Similarly, I would like to thank the distinguished representatives of the Secretary-General's 10-Member Advisory Group for their active engagement in substantive leadership in the discussions.
24. Furthermore, I would like to recognize the important analytical and operational work of the 45-member Inter-Agency Task Team, co-convened by UN-DESA and UNCTAD.
25. Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your active engagement over the past two days, which is what makes this forum relevant and unique.

26. I look forward to your continued efforts to take this work forward and harness the potential of STI for the realization of the SDGs.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.