

**Informal Summary
2013 Economic and Social Council
High-Level Segment**

**General Debate
Tuesday, 2 July 2013, 4pm-6pm**

Opening Remarks

Mr. Nestor Osorio, President of the Economic and Social Council, said the Secretary-General's reports for this year's Annual Ministerial Review and Thematic Discussion and the report of the Committee for Development Policy informed their dialogue on two very important topics. The first report is on science, technology and innovation (STI), and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals ([E/2013/54](#)). The second is on the contribution of the Economic and Social Council to the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda as a principal body for policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development and for the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals ([E/2013/72](#)).

He said the economic context the world was facing was complex and could potentially undermine efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Overcoming remaining challenges required drawing on a range of innovations from science, technology and culture, in the public and private sectors. Mr. Osorio pointed out that the Committee for Development Policy had noted in its report that advancing a nation's capacity in scientific and technological innovation and its effective application in economic activities were indispensable to sustainable and inclusive development. An adequate system of incentives for the promotion and dissemination of new technologies was needed to make them widely available.

Introduction of Reports

Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs introduced the Secretary-General's reports for this year's Annual Ministerial Review and for the Thematic Discussion. He said that in recent years the world had seen the potential contribution that scientific and technological innovation and culture could make to development and to help people realize their aspirations and goals. Overcoming inequality, environmental degradation and extreme poverty would require innovations from science, technology and culture in the public and private sectors. The Annual Ministerial Review report highlighted the need to ensure sustainable agriculture and food security, sustainable energy, access to fresh water and climate change adaptation, and outlined the potential of culture for pursuing sustainable development. Particular importance should be attached to the role of culture in promoting poverty reduction, fostering gender equality, and protecting the environment. The report offered recommendations to enable science, technology, innovation and culture to flourish.

The Thematic Report of the Secretary-General was also before the Council and it emphasized the contributions that the Council could make to the post-2015 framework through six key roles. The first was through the priorities identified by the Council. The second key role was the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda. The third was the potential of ECOSOC in monitoring implementation

and providing accountability mechanisms. The fourth was the mandate of the Council to promote coordination and coherence. The fifth role was addressing global emergencies and humanitarian crises, and the sixth stressed that the Council's critical role in engaging a wide range of development partners could be strengthened further.

The report emphasized that the capacity of both the Council and the UN system to respond to crises can be improved. Mr. Wu said he was confident this Session of the Council would bring urgent global attention to the importance of science, technology, innovation and culture for development, accompanied by the Council's policy guidance. He said he was also confident that the General Debate will greatly enhance the contribution of ECOSOC for the post-2015 development agenda.

Introduction of the Report of the Committee for Development Policy

Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo, Chairperson of the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) introduced the Report of the Committee for Development Policy ([E/2013/33](#)) on its Fifteenth Session in a video address. The session was held in New York from 18 to 22 March 2013.

The Council examined several development issues of relevance for current and future deliberations. It considered science and technology, small-island developing States, smooth transition from the category of least developed countries, and international cooperation for the post-2015 era. He focused his statement on CDP analysis of science, technology and innovation for sustainable development.

He said that science and technology were central for economic development and its centrality to sustainable development was reflected in the fact that technological choices had many implications, not only for economic progress. He said that development is to a large extent a process of capacity building, and the creation of a national knowledge system in general and STI capacities in particular is part of this process. Developed countries are frontrunners in the creation of STI capacities, and developing countries are lagging behind, though some of them are striving to close the gap. Catching-up offers some advantages in drawing from knowledge and skills accumulated elsewhere. In this regard, the Committee's report considered whether the current international trade and investment regimes provided developing countries with sufficient policy space to promote national science, technology and innovation capacities. Measures that developed countries had used to support their own industrialization were no longer available.

There was need for a global dialogue on reform of the international property rights regime as the stringent protection of property rights could be a serious deterrent for the realization of global goals. Systems of security, technology and innovation were also needed to foster new innovations and dissemination of new knowledge and technologies. In this regard, the Committee argued that the international community could consider a broad research exemption for experimental users and judicial power to require non-exclusive licensing in the spirit of public interest. The CDP report also argued that there is need to consider knowledge and technologies that contribute to meeting basic human needs and to addressing environmental challenges as global public goods.

The Committee had also examined the vulnerabilities and development needs of Small-Island Developing States and possible policy responses. Without concrete global measures and support from the international community, these States could not properly confront the

challenges faced. Restoring stability to global economic and financial markets is needed to support their sustained economic growth. In regard to the Least-Developed Countries, the Committee welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution ([A/RES/67/221](#)) on the smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries.

The Committee had also progressed with its work on how the United Nations development agenda should proceed in the post-2015 era and highlighted that particular attention should be paid to rising inequalities and the persistence of high levels of abject poverty; and it recommended that the United Nations should incorporate the reduction of inequality as a specific goal with measureable targets.

General Debate

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) started its High-level Segment general debate on the theme of the Annual Ministerial Review: science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Speakers said that science, technology, innovation and culture were key drivers of sustainable development, economic growth and meeting the Millennium Development Goals as their deadline approached. However, concerns were expressed that the lack of technology transfer from the developed to the developing countries, the economic crisis, and competing policy priorities in the post-2015 development agenda impacted the integration of science, technology and innovation in policies aimed at tackling the world's problems. Many said that science, technology and innovation could help engineer new models of production and consumption to build a more equitable world.

In addition to climate change, sustainable energy solutions and food security, other common issues raised by speakers included:

- the digital divide, where many countries said the cost of technology, such as computers, was prohibitive to spreading the use of information and communication technologies in their countries;
- connectivity was also a barrier, although broadband offered great opportunities for education and economic growth, the infrastructure and financial support to enhance this was not in place;
- the need for North-South cooperation in sharing skills, knowledge and technology, as well as growing opportunities for South-South cooperation, both of which could support research, development and entrepreneurship;
- the need for investment and encouragement of creative industries to allow them to bring forward new solutions, and a patent system to protect and profit from these ideas, once developed;
- promoting global partnerships to share knowledge and experiences so that all may benefit.
- Identifying emerging priorities for the post-2015 development agenda, such as healthcare, valuing culture and an equitable trading system;
- the possibility for ECOSOC to have a stronger mandate in following up on the recommendations of international summits.

H.E. Mr. Peter Thomson, Permanent Representative of **Fiji** to the United Nations Office at New York and Chairman of the Group of 77, speaking on behalf of the **Group of 77 and**

China, endorsed the theme of this year's Annual Ministerial Review. He said the Millennium Development Goals remained critical in meeting the basic needs of people in developing countries, in particular the poorest and most disadvantaged.

He saw science, technology, innovation and culture as essential drivers for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The remaining and emerging challenges, both at national and global levels included climate change, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, loss of biodiversity, stagnant economic growth, and the increasing marginalization of the poor. These placed great urgency on international corporations to facilitate an adequate diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge and promote access to and acquisition of technology by developing countries, to help eradicate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The Group was concerned that for the majority of the developing countries access to the benefits of STI remained uneven. The Group of 77 and China urged the Secretary-General to take immediate action to establish a technology bank and a science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to the least developed countries. The Group supported the Secretary-General's Report and recommendations to the 67th General Assembly regarding the possible options for a technology facilitation mechanism. This mechanism must address the needs of developing countries, including the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally-sound technologies and capacity building.

He said that in order to ensure that no one is left behind in STI development and while working to achieve the MDGs on poverty eradication, more North-South cooperation is needed to reduce the digital divide, and bridge the existing technology gaps. Strengthened international cooperation was needed to improve support for developing countries in greater STI development. This required the mobilization of financial resources, capacity building and the sharing of best-practices, as well as technology transfer.

The Group of 77 and China named six areas where international cooperation is vital for STI development in developing countries: infrastructure, funding mechanisms for research, commercialization of scientific knowledge, strategic partnerships for technology transfer and dissemination, access to venture capital and technology transfer, and measures for improving technological capacity. Developed countries can also assist with efforts to improve education infrastructure and international education exchanges. It was necessary to increase entrepreneurial skills, business training and technical, professional and vocational training.

The Group of 77 and China stressed the importance of designing policies to support STI, and to utilize the potential of culture within the framework of national development strategies for sustainable development, linking them to social, economic and environmental policies. National governments need to play an increasing role in fostering environments that can generate research and development, innovation and technologies. In particular, increased foreign direct investment, enhanced market access and international cooperation are necessary. Gender-sensitive policies are also required to promote the equitable participation of women and girls in education, institutions, employment, as well as at all levels of decision-making.

In addition, there is a need to make culture intrinsic to economic, social and environmental policies. Culture is inherent in all spheres of sustainable development. Developing countries

need assistance to promote their cultural industries, cultural tourism and culture-related microenterprises. Traditional knowledge, in particular, also should be seen as an enhancer of science and technology.

The Group of 77 and China believed that STI solutions for development challenges that are already successful need to be enhanced and scaled up, nationally, regionally and internationally. It also was recommended at looking for more partnerships with the private sector and civil society.

Mr. Rolandas Krisciunas, Vice Foreign Minister for Foreign Affairs of **Lithuania**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, said science, technology, innovation and culture were indeed essential enablers and drivers for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and in promoting all dimensions of sustainable development.

He said the European Union has already contributed and will further contribute to this agenda as an innovation hub for science and technology solutions that address global societal challenges including the transition towards a greener economy, climate action, sustainable agriculture, food security, strengthening health and meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

In a changing world, the European Union will become a sustainable and inclusive economy avoiding the shortcomings of previous growth models. Innovative ideas must be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs and improve people's lives. The new Framework Programme for Research and Innovation – Horizon 2020 – will support eco-innovation. With Horizon 2020, the European Commission will put forward a new strategy for international research and innovation cooperation. Building capacities on research and innovation was a very effective tool to achieve and capitalize on the Millennium Development Goals.

He stressed the importance of science, technology and innovation for food security and global health. First, increasing food availability implied more demand-driven research and innovation in the public domain, giving sufficient attention to traditional knowledge and diversified food crops, and making sure that innovations were accessible to farmers and suited to their needs. He welcomed initiatives to promote agricultural research and innovation, with a view to improving agricultural productivity, sustainability and resilience through research, knowledge sharing, capacity building and promoting cooperation and partnerships with the private sector. Moreover, assisting developing nations in matters of food security will be handled by actively supporting greater participation of civil society and farmer organizations in the policy making processes and creating stronger linkages between EU-based farmer organizations and those from developing countries. All these efforts by the EU are also meant to assist developing countries and their low income population towards achieving the MDG 1

The European Union also has a longstanding commitment to respond to global health challenges with research and innovation. This commitment was clearly reflected in the EU's partnership approach that resulted in the launch of several international initiatives in global health research. The EU signed an agreement with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2013 in order to fight HIV/Aids, malaria, tuberculosis, and other poverty related diseases.

Beyond agriculture and food security, the European Union worked together with developing countries in other fields of research and development, including clean and environmental technology, natural hazards, earth observation, ICT, and health. Europe is involved in the advancement of Earth Observation technologies and related environmental applications. European Earth Observation covers remote sensing satellite, ground-based, air-based and ocean-based monitoring devices. This enabled a collection of high quality observation data for different purposes such as urban planning, adaptation to climate change, disaster reduction, disease control and humanitarian relief.

The European Union attached great importance to the contribution of culture to sustainable human, social and economic development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by providing support to the cultural and creative sectors in developing countries and assistance and vocational training for culture professionals.

Mr. Jean-Francais R. Zinsou, Permanent Representative of **Benin** to the United Nations Office in New York, speaking on behalf of the **Group of Least Developed Countries (LDC)**, endorsed the remarks made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. He referenced the Istanbul Programme of Action adopted at the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs which has given prominence to the issue of promoting science, technology and innovation, as a key factor in developing productive capacities in the least developed countries; alongside the promotion of infrastructure, energy and developing the private sector.

The Istanbul Programme of Action underscored that the LDCs, in order to develop their capacity to produce, must acquire new technologies and strengthen their knowledge base and local capacity for research and development as they seek to bridge their technological and digital divide. He also outlined that the group of LDCs sees an advantage in setting up a technology bank. This will lead to an acceleration of the development processes. The analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the least developed countries should bring out the value of local knowledge that these countries have. This local knowledge can also be marketed globally.

Mr. Zinsou said the LDCs wanted to ensure that structural reforms alone were not sufficient but should go hand-in-hand with other efforts, such as combating youth unemployment and improving the quality of training. He stressed the importance of combating youth unemployment through the help of STI. Training establishments and the private sector should form a symbiotic relationship in order to facilitate both their needs. The inability to invest domestically meant that the least developed countries remained largely dependent on external aid in order to set up centers to encourage national companies to innovate and to produce new products.

Another challenge facing the least developed countries was that their technology was relatively obsolete. The LDCs can not capitalize on new production opportunities. Those countries should receive targeted help in order to attract the investment they needed. The young people in those countries also should receive training opportunities, including online training to socially integrate them.

Furthermore, it is important for the LDCs to become successfully embedded in the global economy. Industrialization must happen through using green technologies with less carbon dioxide emissions. A stronger South-South and Triangular Cooperation could support this. These movements towards the graduation of developing nations must take into account the

innovation index, which was recently launched and will be proof of the progress being made by the LDCs.

Ms. Anayansi Rodriguez Camejo, Permanent Representative of **Cuba** to the United Nations Office at Geneva, speaking on behalf of the **Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)**, said that the financial and economic crisis and other global challenges continued to have huge negative economic and social impacts, particularly in developing countries. There was a need for a strengthened multilateralism, which would contribute to a more transparent and democratic global governance. She said if ECOSOC wanted to reach its full potential, the commitments of the development partners have to be fulfilled.

The Community welcomed the main theme on which the Annual Ministerial Review was focused and reiterated the importance of creating mechanisms for the transfer of technology, new and additional resources and capacity building to developing countries, as well as the need to protect and promote the values of traditional knowledge and cultural diversity.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States reiterated concerns regarding the lack of attention the United Nations development system was giving to Middle Income Countries. These countries face systemic challenges such as high-levels of poverty and inequalities. She concluded with saying CELAC is committed to helping their sisterly nations through South-South and Triangular Cooperation. She also asked for specific policies to be implemented by the General Assembly and ECOSOC to address the development challenges of Middle Income Countries without undermining the resources allocated to other countries.

Mr. Sarath Amunigama, Senior Minister of International Monetary Cooperation and Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning, **Sri Lanka**, speaking on behalf of the **Group of 15 (G-15)**, said the Group of 15 believed that the rapidly accelerating pace of science, technology and innovation and the development, transfer and diffusion of technologies to developing countries had the potential to make a significant contribution to development.

He called for an intensification of STI-based solutions. He saw a need for a facilitation mechanism that supports technology transfers, which would serve as an accelerator for the progress of STI. The G-15 called for introducing inclusive and forward-looking mechanisms of sustainable development by building international partnerships, strengthening cooperation in science, technology, innovation and in facilitating access, transfer and adaptation of new and competitive technologies and knowledge.

The Group of 15 emphasized the need for developed countries to fulfill commitments in terms of cooperation, technology transfer, technical assistance and capacity building in science, technology and innovation. Stronger and innovative intergovernmental, academic and commercial collaborative mechanisms at regional and global levels could give a boost to the ongoing efforts to integrate the science, technology, innovation and culture ethos into development processes.

The Group of 15 called for greater support to creative industries in developing countries. The Group 15 appealed for enhanced emphasis on the potential of culture for sustainable development. Fully realizing that culture-sensitive approach to social policies and public services; particularly in education and health, are important for development. The Group 15 considered that the post-2015 framework could integrate culture as a key element.

Mr. Rashid Meredov, Vice Premier and Minister of Foreign Affairs of **Turkmenistan**, said that this was a particularly important moment as Turkmenistan had become a member of ECOSOC for the first time. Achieving real progress, real economic growth and a fundamental improvement in living conditions was unthinkable without an agreed comprehensive approach, which should reflect the need to incorporate intellectual and technological resources in practical actions.

He noted that the international community is entering a new culture of international communication, which calls for the recognition of all persons to take part in the achievement of sustainable development and requires a high level of responsibility of all member states. He called for the pooling of efforts of the international community to ensure formulated solutions to various social and economic development challenges are appropriately effective.

He said that a new culture of international communication that recognized the unquestionable right of all countries and peoples to participate in the process of development was needed. A reliable energy supply in world markets also was important for sustainable development and Turkmenistan had proposed that the United Nations look at universal mechanisms to ensure the development of infrastructure for the transit of energy. Innovation and technology were needed to develop energy production and transport infrastructures that were environmentally friendly; and the potential of culture is essential to stimulate economic growth.

Mr. Pasquale Valentini, Minister for Foreign and Political Affairs of **San Marino**, said culture, in all its forms, is a driver of economic growth and sustainable development; which San Marino embodies through the preservation of Mount Titano, a historic centre on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

The objective of sustainable development must be pursued at all levels, and stressed that science, technology, innovation and culture all played an important role in sustainable development and economic growth. He noted that the world has experienced major changes and has been confronted with new and more complex global challenges, which requires a global political commitment and the coordinated action of all countries, at all levels and in every sector.

The Millennium Development Goals should be the starting point or the reference framework for the post-2015 development agenda. Global partnerships in the post-2015 development programme should take account of all stakeholders who could foster the development of technologies and infrastructure necessary to meet development goals. He also stressed that the proposals to be discussed in the review of resolution [A/RES/61/16](#) on the strengthening of the ECOSOC should aim at making the functions of the Council more effective, enhancing the ability to offer a crucial contribution to the achievement of sustainable development and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

He recommended for the Council to continue promoting dialogue and cooperation with the Bretton Woods Institutions and the World Trade Organization. The dialogue should lead to a careful consideration of today's global economy and favor greater consistency in the objectives of the different international organizations dealing with economic, social and development issues. Reform also should take place by making the best possible use of existing resources and projects.

Mr. Madhav Prasad Ghimire, Minister of Foreign Affairs of **Nepal**, endorsed the statements made on behalf of Group of 77 and China and the statements made on behalf of the Least Developed Countries. He said the exchange of views in this Session held significance in shaping and promoting the future envisioned at the Rio+20 Conference last year.

Poverty and associated problems were still very pervasive in the least developed countries. There was a need to draw lessons from efforts in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals into the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals. He noted that key to building productive capacity and overcoming development constraints relies on the application of science, technology and innovation, specifically in regard to the conservation of indigenous knowledge and the rapid transfer of technologies to help poor countries address strategic sustainability challenges.

The promotion of information and communication technologies played a vital role in empowering people and innovation was central to reducing vulnerabilities in countries like Nepal from natural disasters, climate change, and suitable migration and adaptation measures. He commented on the importance of fostering the culture of innovation, which has a strong correlation with the realization of the rich potentials in the LDCs and LLDCs. Nepal hoped that this session would come up with result-oriented outcomes in support of building its productive capacity and ultimately enabling it to graduate from the least developed country category by the target date of 2022..

Ms. Rola Dashti, Minister of Planning and Development of **Kuwait**, said Kuwait said that science, technology and innovation were important because they could enhance, among other things, access to knowledge and education, productivity and economic growth. The focus of this session of the Council was in line with the conclusions of the Rio+20 Conference on sustainable development.

She indicated that the international community is entering a new technological era; witnessing many changes in economic, social and cultural concepts, which contribute to strengthening relations around the world, improving international trade and enhancing international foreign investments. However, remaining challenges included extreme poverty, malnutrition and hunger, which took the lives of millions of people around the world. She noted that in order to meet the needs of the people, there needs to be an equitable balance between the three basic elements for economic sustainable development: the people, the planet and profit. She also stressed the need for equality and justice in development to increase the widespread enjoyment of the right to a decent life, decent jobs and a world free from hunger and disease.

Developed countries should fulfill their commitments in that regard without imposing new obligations on developing countries. She concluded by recommending ECOSOC have a more active role in thematic monitoring at the national, regional, and global levels to ensure the comprehensive implementation of outcomes of all relevant summits.

Ms. Maria Teiveira, Minister of Science and Technology of **Angola**, commented on the country's success in achieving substantial economic growth and the efforts made by the government to implement science and technological development to foster such growth. She highlighted various instruments adopted by the Government to guide scientific and technological activities. For example, investments in the development of telecommunications

had contributed to the increase of the mobile network coverage by 73 per cent and in the installation of optical fiber.

She said science, technology and innovation had a key role to play in addressing current concerns and challenges and promoting sustainable development. In regard to bilateral cooperation on the scientific and technological fields, she welcomed the initiative of the German government and regional partnership between Angola, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia and Zambia to create a Southern African Center for Science and Services for Climate Change Adaptation and Use Sustainable Land. She also announced the Government's plans to launch the Annual Plan for STI in 2014 as a mechanism for the implementation of the National Strategy on STI and to further address the challenges related to the promotion of sustainable development.

Angola supported the Secretary-General's proposal to create a new United Nations partnership for facilitating the development of science, technology and innovation for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and for STI to be incorporated as well in the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr. Josko Klisovic, Deputy Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of **Croatia**, said that he wished to share with the Council the feelings of joy and pride of the Croatian people after Croatia yesterday became the twenty-eighth member of the European Union. It was impossible to imagine any kind of progress without giving due regard to human creativity and innovation. Membership into the EU would present an opportunity to further strengthen Croatia's investment in innovation and the field of international research.

He said the role of STI and culture in the post-2015 development agenda should consider utilizing the skills of local policy makers and their knowledge-based decision-making was crucial to the success of sustainable development. He said that the multi-dimensional nature of innovation had an impact not only on the economy but also on all aspects of governance. In these times of far-reaching economic crisis, part of the solution lies in employing innovative tools while still adhering to budget cuts. Determined to boost more innovation-driven growth, Croatia has focused on improving its governance and regulatory framework, ensuring strong scientific and technological capacity in the private and public sectors, and strengthening the innovation potential of the economy.

In the past 15 months, Croatia had taken several concrete steps aimed at aligning Croatian scientific, technological and innovation systems with the best practices of the most developed countries. The South East European Centre for entrepreneurial learning was an example of Croatia's recognized good practices with an international impact. He said the nature of science, technology, innovation and culture needed further deliberation. It should be clearly reflected in the targets, indicators, means of implementation, and the global partnership framework for sustainable development.