



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

16 May 2017

Excellency,

Further to my letter dated 11 April, and as a complement to the on-going ECOSOC Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation, I wish to remind Member States that I will convene an SDG Action Event on *Innovation and Connectivity* on Wednesday 17 May 2017 in the Economic and Social Council Chamber.

The event will allow Member States, UN leaders, civil society and others to engage directly with leading innovators and CEOs from the technology sector to explore ways to harness the power of technology to drive SDG implementation. At the event, we will focus on how to increase connectivity and help solve the implementation challenges we face. We will showcase innovative approaches and discuss the risks and opportunities for the public good that innovation offers.

Please find attached the final programme for this event. Please note, as outlined in the briefing provided by my Office on Wednesday 10 May, that this meeting will feature a free-seating arrangement. In addition, given the subject at hand, an innovative set-up will provide for dynamic presentations from expert speakers. In this context, there will be no speakers list. Dedicated time will be provided in the afternoon session for Member States and Observers to engage in an interactive discussion with speakers. Formal statements can be uploaded to UN PaperSmart.

I encourage you all to attend and participate actively in this event.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



SDG ACTION EVENT INNOVATION

17 May 2017, ECOSOC Chamber, UN Headquarters, New York

10:00–11:00

SESSION 1: FROM LINEAR TO EXPONENTIAL INNOVATION

How can we harness the exponential innovation renaissance and adapt to the pace of change when our institutions, policies, and mind-sets tend to be linear?

10:00–10:10

H.E. PETER THOMSON
President of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly

10:10–10:20

H.E. AMINA MOHAMMED
Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

10:20–10:40

KEYNOTE 1: Perspective shift: linear to exponential innovation

DR. PETER DIAMANDIS
Chairman of XPrize Foundation and Singularity University

10:40–11:00

KEYNOTE 2: Breakthrough innovation and making impact on the SDGs

DR. ASTRO TELLER
Chief Executive Officer of Google X

11:00–12:00

SESSION 2: A NEW ERA OF CONNECTED PROBLEM-SOLVERS

How can connectivity help unleash the innovativeness of the global population to solve pressing challenges in pursuing the Sustainable Development Goals?

FORMAT: Panel discussion moderated by MARCUS SHINGLES,
Chief Executive Officer of XPrize Foundation

PANELLISTS:

H.E. JEAN PHILBERT NSENGIMANA
Minister of Youth and Information and Communication Technology of Rwanda

LARA STEIN
Founder of TEDx and Director at MIT ReACT

KEVIN LO
Senior Director for Infrastructure Connectivity, Facebook

CHIYOKO OSBORNE
Serial Entrepreneur and Chief Strategy Officer of Impact Collaboration Platform

12:00–13:00

SESSION 3: ACTION ON INNOVATION AND BREAKTHROUGH TECHNOLOGY

What are the examples of innovative approaches and where are the gaps?

FORMAT: Panel discussion moderated by DAVID WALLERSTEIN,
Chief Exploration Officer of Tencent

PANELLISTS:

ANOUSHEH ANSARI
Co-founder and Chairwoman of Prodea Systems

FENG MU
Chief Executive Officer of BGI Group (Global Genomic Services)

WILL MARSHALL
Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Planet Labs

UMA VALETI
Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of Memphis Meats





SDG ACTION EVENT INNOVATION

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13:15–14:45

LUNCH BREAK

15:00–17:40

SESSION 4: INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION ON OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

How can the UN and Governments manage risks and seize opportunities to be enablers to technological innovation and ensure the public good?

15:00–15:20

KEYNOTE 3: Managing risks and seizing opportunities for public good

DR. JUSTINE CASSELL

Associate Dean of technology strategy and impact, Carnegie Mellon University

15:20–17:20

FORMAT: Interactive session moderated by H.E. MACHARIA KAMAU,
Co-Chair of the UN Science, Technology and Innovation Forum

Strictly three-minute interventions or questions from Government Ministers, Member States, the private sector, the UN System, and other stakeholders.

RESPONDENTS:

ROB NAIL

Chief Executive Officer of Singularity University

DR. JUSTINE CASSELL

Associate Dean of technology strategy and impact, Carnegie Mellon University

MARTIN STUCHTEY

Founder and Managing Partner at SystemiQ

17:20–17:40

Positive disruption for the future we want

DAVID ROBERTS

Chairman of 1Qbit and Chief Executive Officer of Exponential Leadership

17:40–18:00

SESSION 5: CONCLUSION

How can the UN bring a bold innovative leadership approach to SDG implementation, and serve as a global catalyst for exponential innovation?

17:40–17:55

How organizations are adapting to change and innovating

SALIM ISMAIL

Technology strategist and author of "Exponential Organizations"

17:55–18:00

Final reflections

H.E. PETER THOMSON

President of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly

