



**UN-OHRLLS**

**Statement by**

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Excellencies,  
Distinguished members of the panel,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

First, I wish to extend a sincere thank you to the organizers of this session and especially to the moderator for our session.

Participating in your session is a high priority for me - it is a high priority as science, technology and innovation are the key building blocks for the 91 countries my office represents in achieving the goals set in Agenda 2030.

Indeed, the central mandate of my office - the OHRLLS - is to be a central advocate for and support the sustainable development of 91 Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing Countries and Landlocked Developing Countries representing well over 1 billion people.

I do not need to convince this audience here that Science, Technology and Innovation is a cornerstone of a successful transition towards more sustainable and prosperous futures.

My question is, why technological advances and ideas continue too often to simply pass by developing countries?

How do we solve this problem?

It is easy to say that we need to urgently increase our efforts to develop, scale up, and widely disseminate technology. But how to do it?

It is the HOW TO DO IT that is at the core of OHRLLS's focus of work.

So, in the spirit of action, the spirit of how to do it, I happy to share with you that The Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, a new entity dedicated to facilitate LDCs' access to technology, science and innovation, formally came into being this fall. The Bank is set to start operations in 2018.

This could not have been done without the dedicated support of the government of Turkey, which has so generously agreed to host this new entity.

Thank you

This also marks the achievement of SDG 17.8, the very first SDG target to be achieved.

This is not about symbolism or saying here is an achieved goal. This is about great strategic support to the LDCs in their overall achievement of Agenda 2030.

Indeed, the establishment of the Technology Bank had already been a high priority for LDCs under the Istanbul Programme of Action. Its importance was subsequently confirmed in the 2015 Addis

Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and then of course again in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Distinguished panelists,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

This bank's main mission is to answer the critical question of HOW - how we can support the improved access to and diffusion of science, technology and innovation in the Global South.

This Bank is all about leaving no one behind.

You all have followed the discussions, meetings, events here in Antalya. We have heard over and over again that the great new divide of our times is in access to science, technology and the capacity to innovate.

We must ensure that the LDCs are not yet again left behind.

Now, what is this Bank expected to contribute to ensuring that?

The Technology Bank is expected to broaden the application of science, technology and innovation in the world's poorest countries.

It is expected to contribute to improving technology-related policies, facilitate technology transfer, and accelerate the integration of LDCs into the global knowledge-based economy.

It also is expected to serve as a knowledge hub connecting needs, resources and actors.

It is expected to facilitate LDC access to existing technology-related projects and fostering joint initiatives with relevant organizations and the private sector.

To do so, we must tap into and support the vast pool of talent and innovation we find in every corner of the world.

To do so, we must also leverage all of the capacities the UN system has to offer. No one will be able to go it alone!

Last week in New York, the Governing Council of the Bank decided on a budget and a work plan for 2018. We are off to an exciting start.

The Bank's programme will naturally be closely coordinated with the activities of the United Nations system, including the so-called Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

These activities must and will be guided by the needs and priorities of LDCs.

For the Bank to be sustainable and of value-add, it must promote LDC ownership and strengthen domestic institutional capacity in Science, technology and Innovation.

The Bank is also not yet another entity competing with or worse duplicating what exists already. Quite the opposite, it has a complementary role to play. This is why I place very high priority on ensuring that activities already undertaken by other UN agencies or donors are taken into account, not repeated and reflected and that we enhance partnerships within the UN and beyond.

The key is indeed to leverage the existing initiatives to implement the Bank's projected programme of work.

For the year to come – that is 2018 – the Bank is expected to focus on activities in two areas:

(a) Technology Needs Assessments, and

(b) Digital Research Access.

The number of LDCs the Bank can service will be driven by available resources.

We are just at the beginning of what we hope could prove an exciting new breakthrough in how we can deliver services to LDCs.

Figuratively and practically...our generous Turkish hosts are still completing the building that will soon house the Bank.

And if you will allow me a quick plug here, Mr Moderator, we are currently accepting applications for the position of Managing Director of the Bank ...I encourage you all to please go to the UN's recruitment website and take a look.

Once physically in place and staffed, we must continue if not accelerate to resource mobilization and partnerships to support the ambitious workplan. But we must be ambitious as we must scale up efforts in every country.

We already are two years into Agenda 2030 and, if I may say, the climate changes will also not wait for us and we all know the critical role access to science, technology and innovation play in this area that for many of the LDCs is literally a question of survival.

The needs of LDCs are indeed extensive.

I was heartened to hear in several fora and discussions the strong recognition that we must scale up capacity building support. YES, the LDCs must be provided with expedited capacity support in their determination to meet the 2030 goals.

No one is more committed to this than the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We at OHRLLS have made it our central task to mobilise all of the UN system capacities, yet, we still

need additional voluntary contributions and support from other partners from the public to private to civil society sectors.

Today, I invite all stakeholders, including the private sector and foundations, to extend your support to this exciting new initiative.

Thank you.