Statement

by

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UN Technology Bank for LDCs: Driving the SDGs through STI

Monday, 15 July 2019, 18:30-20:00,
Conference Room 4,
United Nations
Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Colleagues and Friends.

I first wish to thank Turkey, Norway, Qatar, Malawi, UNCTAD and the Technology Bank for convening this side-event.

Science, Technology and Innovation are at the core of finding our road to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. They drive productive capacity, structural transformation, ways and means for poverty eradication, and they very much drive the transitioning to sustainable development. They truly will be determining in addressing climate change.

As I keep saying, our true challenge will be to ensure that the 47 LDCs will not be left behind in achieving what we say in the Istanbul Programme of Action and in Agenda 2030.

For that, we must ensure that they also can fully access the benefits of Science, Technology and Innovation.

The current reality is that LDCs continue to lag behind in various STI indicators, including R&D, human resource capacity, patents and innovation, just to list a few!

Recognizing this, the Istanbul Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called for the establishment and full operationalization of the Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries.

The Technology Bank was the first SDG target to be achieved, target 17.8.

This is a positive step forward in our shared determination to include all, to leave no one behind in making the 2030 Agenda a reality for all.

It is a beginning.
The United Nations entity on Science Technology and Innovation- dedicated to the 47 LDCs - the Technology Bank has ambitious tasks ahead.

It must be able to support countries to tackle one of the great new divides of our times: access to science, technology and capacity to innovate.

The Bank enjoys the support of the collective expertise of the entire UN system.

We hope, the Bank will translate global initiatives into concrete actions on the ground in support of the most vulnerable countries. Through that, we hope it will help countries in their strive for transformative change.

Excellencies,

More than 8 years have elapsed since the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

There is not much time left to ensure that the programme goals agreed on by member states become reality for the peoples of the LDCs.

At Doha in 2021, the Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs will consider the next 10-year partnership framework in support of the LDCs. The time period of the next Programme of Action for LDCs will coincide with the remaining years of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

We have no time to waste. It is NOW that we must invest in the ways and means to harness the potentials of STI to maximize the social, economic and environmental benefits for all. We must ensure we include the poorest and most marginalized.

LDCs need both - the will and the support to embrace the on-going Technological Revolution and keep pace with new technological advances.

As many economies and societies already show us, embracing fully STI has significant impact on labor, connectivity, delivery of basic services, disaster management, and thus ultimately on Sustainable Development.
Right now, there is a critical need for diagnostics, assessments and policy reviews of STI needs and gaps in all LDCs.

We must find coherent science, technology and innovation policy mixes that can facilitate enabling environments to promote STI.

These policy mixes also must address potential socioeconomic impacts be it from the perspective of socio- economic changes or that of how to ensure that we leave no one behind.

Building the STI base requires long-term infrastructure investments and investments in institutional capacity building and ensuring supply of skilled human resources.

It is now that we must invest in building the productive, creative and digital skills of the next generation. They must be equipped to effectively build and participate in more diversified and sustainable economies.

A key challenge relates to developing critical and basic STI infrastructure. It is now that investment in ICT infrastructure is required.

Yes, the needs are vast and complex, and time is of the essence!

And this also applies to the Technology Bank. Further resources are needed to ensure the Technology Bank can reach its full potential with activities in all LDCs.

So once more, allow me to appeal to all Member States and all stakeholders to contribute to the Technology Bank.

I thank you.