



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

Statement by Pakistan at the 27th Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development 15 April 2024

Agenda item 3. Science and technology for development

Priority theme: (b) Global cooperation in science, technology and innovation for development

**Madam President,
Excellencies and distinguished delegates,**

At the outset, my delegation expresses its appreciation of the Secretary-General's Report on Global Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for development. The lessons and recommendations outlined in the report underscore the need for creating synergies through enhanced international cooperation for an inclusive and equitable global STI agenda.

Strengthening the national STI capacities of developing countries remains integral to the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we witnessed the prowess of STI policies in mitigating the most pressing global health challenge of our times. But the transformational role of STI as a driver of economic change in the developing world remains modest.

Even as use of digital technologies has become pervasive worldwide, gaps in digital connectivity are increasingly apparent due to the digital divide. The economic downturn resulting from climate catastrophes, ongoing conflicts and reduction in international trade flows have reduced the national fiscal space for investment in supportive digital infrastructure. This is further compounded by rising debt burdens and eroding developmental gains.

In such an environment, it is pivotal that STI policies and outcomes in developing countries be approached not just from a national systems perspective but from a global policy perspective. Urgent steps are needed to develop and disseminate the necessary STI tools, policy advice and technical know-how to those lagging behind.

Madam Chair,

To chart a course forward for inclusive global STI policy-making, Pakistan would like to highlight some key policy considerations:

First, a robust global development financing framework is essential to enable and accelerate investments in STI related sectors. This requires inter-alia fairer international tax, trading and international financial regimes for developing countries, as a means to generate sufficient fiscal space and channel resources to STI capacity building and research.

Second, global collaboration is also needed not simply to build digital infrastructure but also for setting standards and regulations which take account of developing country needs and capacities. This must also be complemented by enhanced international collaboration in technical assistance, knowledge sharing and technology transfer to reduce the existing digital divide and improve interoperability.

Third, an increase in STI-related official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries is vital. STI-related ODA to developing countries has stagnated over the last decade fluctuating between 1.2 and 1.8% of total ODA. In 2022, only about half of the 0.7% Gross National Income commitment was met.

Fourth, both North–South and South–South partnerships for STI are essential. The CSTD should continue building partnerships and intensify interaction with universities, innovation incubators and private sector entities to promote breakthrough innovations and facilitate two-way exchange of real-time information and policy insights.

In conclusion, technologies should not perpetuate inequalities. They should instead be deployed to reduce them, in support of social protection, health-care, learning and overall economic progress. Preparing developing countries to harness technologies for these purposes is essential for inclusive, resilient and sustainable global development.

I thank you.
