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Commission on Science and Technology for Development

Report on the twenty-seventh session (15–19 April 2024)

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Summary

At its twenty-seventh session, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development discussed the role of science, technology and innovation in reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises, in particular with regard to the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions, and reviewed the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels. In addition, the Commission considered two priority themes, entitled "Data for development" and "Global cooperation in science, technology and innovation for development". The session included a segment on science, technology and innovation policy reviews and a segment on highlights of technical cooperation activities in the context of the work of the Commission.

During the ministerial round table on the theme, "The role of science, technology and innovation in reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions", ministers and other high-level speakers shared information on their respective countries' use of science, technology and innovation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and eradicating poverty. These included fostering the creation and growth of start-ups, which play an important role in connecting technology with society by engaging in research on frontier technologies such as quantum computing and green energy; improving the quality of higher education and developing scientific and technological research; promoting innovation and technology transfer; and ensuring investments in water desalination technologies. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 77/326 on the International Decade of Sciences for Sustainable Development, 2024–2033, underscored the vital role of science, technology and innovation in delivering sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Furthermore, gender-related and other challenges in science, technology and innovation should be transformed into opportunities, by strengthening the ecosystem of science and technology so that practical and scalable solutions can be found through international cooperation. Speakers commended the Commission for not only serving as a forum for sharing lessons and best practices and providing foresight about critical trends, but also playing an instrumental role in fostering cooperation among countries on harnessing science, technology and innovation solutions to address relevant pressing issues.

The above role was also emphasized by participants, including ministers, in discussions on the two priority themes.

In considering the priority theme "Global cooperation in science, technology and innovation for development", participants, including ministers, reaffirmed the importance of inclusive and equitable international collaboration in science, technology and innovation to deliver the solutions needed to respond to global challenges, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and climate change. It was stressed that science, technology and innovation cooperation efforts should be aimed at closing the technology gap between developed and developing countries, including through increased official development assistance and greater involvement of developing countries in global research networks. Participants also emphasized the importance of incorporating gender-related and other social considerations, sustainable development and an anticipatory culture into policymaking on science, technology and innovation. The Philippines and the United States of America reported to the Commission about their joint workshop on harnessing science, technology and innovation for disaster risk reduction, held in Manila, at the beginning of March 2024,

in collaboration with United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), as secretariat of the Commission. Fourteen members of the Commission shared their practices on using science, technology and innovation solutions to address disaster risks, including the practical application of early warning systems and proposed policy recommendations for effectively harnessing science, technology and innovation for disaster risk reduction. A first-ever exhibition about international cooperation in applying science, technology and innovation to address concrete cases was held, with exhibitors from Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and academia.

At its full-day session on data for development, the Commission discussed the request by the General Assembly, in paragraph 10 of its resolution 77/150, that the Commission explore the connection between data and sustainable development. Member States, academics, representatives of civil society and United Nations agencies (the International Telecommunication Union, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNCTAD, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization) presented their respective perspectives on data and related technologies, notably artificial intelligence. It was generally shared that data had become a crucial economic development asset, and that it could, if managed properly, drive progress towards sustainable and inclusive development. Developing countries, including the least developed countries, faced significant challenges in digital and infrastructural development, as well as the challenge of brain drains when skilled professionals emigrated; hence the need for capacity-building technical assistance to those countries. While the digital gender gap regarding basic mobile phone access had narrowed, a pronounced disparity in smartphone and Internet access significantly hindered women's ability to contribute to and benefit from data-driven development. Given the multi-dimensional nature of data and the diverse national perspectives on the definition of data and data governance, the United Nations should act as a neutral and inclusive platform for discussing data for development in a holistic manner, including data governance. The members of the Commission agreed, in the annual draft resolution on science, technology and innovation for development recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council, that the Commission should be encouraged to consider establishing a working group to hold multi-stakeholder dialogues on the fundamental principles of data governance.

In reviewing the progress made in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, including the 20-year review of the implementation of those outcomes, participants, including ministers, stressed that the Summit was a living process, which could be adapted to accommodate new needs. There was unanimous support for continuing that process. Participants indicated that digital development and enhanced connectivity for all should be maintained as the focus of the process. They also indicated that it was necessary to forge clear and robust links between the 20-year review and the global digital compact, to ensure synergies while avoiding duplication. The secretariat presented an outline of its upcoming report on the 20-year review, which it was preparing with inputs from multi-stakeholders gathered through consultations, including online questionnaires and regional and global open consultations.

Participants welcomed the launch of the science, technology and innovation policy review conducted by UNCTAD for Seychelles, as well as the technology assessment reports for both Seychelles and Zambia. The technology assessment has been a novel project undertaken in the United Nations system in response to recent resolutions adopted by the Council and the General Assembly, in which they encouraged countries to undertake technology assessments on existing, new and

emerging technologies, in order to help to evaluate their development potential and mitigate possible negative effects and risks.

The Commission also held an informal discussion on the global digital compact on 17 April, during the session on the follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit. The discussion signalled the Commission's keen interest in the global digital compact process, given the links between the compact and the Commission's intergovernmental mandate established by the General Assembly in the follow up to the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit, as well as the readiness of Commission members to contribute to the success of the compact process and to its implementation and follow-up. A summary of the informal discussion has been shared with the co-facilitators of the global digital compact.

The Commission adopted two draft resolutions, entitled "Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society" and "Science, technology and innovation for development".

The Commission selected "Diversifying economies in a world of accelerated digitalization" and "Technology foresight and technology assessment for sustainable development" as priority themes for consideration at its twenty-eighth session.

Further information on the session of the Commission is available at https://unctad.org/topic/commission-on-science-and-technology-for-development.

[8 May 2024]

Contents

Chapter I
Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Draft resolutions for adoption by the Council

1. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the outcome documents of the World Summit on the Information Society,[1]

Recalling also its resolution 2006/46 of 28 July 2006 on the follow-up to the World Summit and review of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the mandate that it gave to the Commission,

Recalling further its resolution 2023/3 of 7 June 2023 on the assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 70/125 of 16 December 2015, entitled "Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society", in which the Assembly reaffirmed the World Summit vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information and knowledge, enabling individuals, communities and peoples to achieve their full potential in promoting their sustainable development and improving their quality of life, premised on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting fully and upholding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] and assessed progress made to date, identified gaps and challenges and made recommendations for the future,

Recalling further General Assembly resolutions 77/150 of 14 December 2022, in which the Assembly looked forward to the development of a global digital compact to strengthen digital cooperation through an open and inclusive process, and 78/132 of 19 December 2023, on information and communications technologies for sustainable development, in which the Assembly recognized the important role of information and communications technologies for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, 78/160 of 19 December 2023 on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development and 78/265 of 21 March 2024 on seizing the opportunities of safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems for sustainable development,

Taking note of the report of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, entitled "The age of digital interdependence", and the report of the Secretary-General entitled

[1] See A/C.2/59/3 and A/60/687.
[2] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

"Road map for digital cooperation",[3] as well as the establishment of the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Technology, one of the purposes of which is to facilitate the coordination of the development of a global digital compact that will outline shared principles for an open, free and secure digital future for all,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 77/160 of 14 December 2022 on entrepreneurship for sustainable development,

Taking note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional and international levels,[4]

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development for her role in helping to ensure completion of the aforementioned report in a timely manner,

Taking stock: reviewing the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

1. *Welcomes and urges* the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 70/125;

2. *Welcomes* the constructive and diverse inputs from all stakeholders in the overall review of progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society;

3. *Reaffirms its commitment* to the full implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit and the vision of the 10-year review of the World Summit beyond 2015;

4. *Reaffirms* the 2005 Tunis Agenda for the Information Society,[5] in which was recognized the special and specific funding needs of the developing world, as referred to in paragraph 16 of the 2003 Geneva Declaration of Principles,[6] which faces numerous challenges in the information and communications technology sector, and that there is a strong need to focus on the special financing needs of developing countries in order to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals;

5. *Also reaffirms* the commitment made in General Assembly resolution 70/125 to bridging the digital divides between and within countries, including the gender digital divide, through efforts to improve connectivity, affordability, access to information and knowledge, multilingual content, digital skills and digital literacy, acknowledging specific challenges facing persons with disabilities and specific needs, and those in vulnerable situations;

6. *Welcomes* the emphasis placed by the Commission on the Status of Women on the critical role of women's participation and leadership in science, technology and innovation;

7. *Encourages* close alignment between the World Summit process and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[7] as called for in General Assembly resolution 70/125, highlighting the cross-cutting contribution of information and communications technology to the Sustainable Development Goals and poverty eradication, recognizing the World Summit on the Information Society-Sustainable

[3] A/74/821.
[4] A/79/62-E/2024/3.
[5] See A/60/687.
[6] See A/C.2/59/3, annex
[7] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

Development Goals matrix developed by United Nations World Summit action line facilitators to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and noting that access to information and communications technologies has also become a development indicator and aspiration in and of itself;

8. *Reaffirms* its understanding that the success of the 2030 Agenda will depend on increasing universal, meaningful and affordable access to information and communications technology;

9. *Recognizes* that the World Summit has proven to be a dynamic process that has evolved over the years and is continuing to address the impacts of new and emerging technologies, as well as digital cooperation;

10. *Also recognizes* that information and communications technology infrastructure is fundamental to achieving the goal of digital inclusion and that digital divides persist across income groups, age groups, geography and gender groups, and therefore recalls its commitment to the 2030 Agenda, target 9.c, which aims to significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strives to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020, and in this regard notes the importance of the Connect 2030 Agenda for global telecommunication/information and communication technology, including broadband, for sustainable development;

11. *Welcomes* the remarkable evolution and diffusion of information and communications technologies, underpinned by the contributions of both public and private sectors, which have seen penetration into almost all corners of the globe, created new opportunities for social interaction, enabled new business models and contributed to economic growth and development in all other sectors, while noting the unique and emerging challenges related to their evolution and diffusion;

12. *Notes with concern* that there are still significant digital divides, such as between and within countries and between women and men, which need to be addressed through, among other actions, strengthened enabling policy environments and international cooperation to improve affordability, access, education, capacity-building, multilingualism, cultural preservation, investment and appropriate financing, acknowledges that a gender digital divide exists as part of the digital divides, and encourages all stakeholders to ensure the full participation of girls and women in vulnerable situations in the information society and women's and girls' access to new technologies, especially information and communications technologies for development, including by combating technology-facilitated gender-based violence, such as exploitation, harassment and abuse against women and girls;

13. *Encourages* the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to continue to give due consideration to the impact and challenges of key rapid technological changes and the opportunities to utilize these technological changes to deliver the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals within the respective mandates and existing resources, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 77/150;

14. *Acknowledges* that, in its resolution 77/150, the General Assembly recognized the critical importance of expanding the participation of all countries, in particular developing countries, in the digital economy, and further noted that the Commission on Science and Technology for Development could explore the connection between data and sustainable development, including data governance, while taking into account the multiple dimensions of data, and invites the Commission to explore these issues;

15. *Welcomes* the holding of World Press Freedom Day, celebrated annually on 3 May, proclaimed by the General Assembly and led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

16. *Also welcomes* the holding of World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, celebrated annually on 17 May and led by the International Telecommunication Union;

17. *Notes* the ongoing implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit, emphasizing, in particular, its multi-stakeholder nature, the roles played in this regard by leading agencies as action line facilitators and the roles of the regional commissions, regional World Summit review initiatives and the United Nations Group on the Information Society, and expresses its appreciation for the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development in assisting the Economic and Social Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up to the World Summit;

18. *Recognizes* the value and principle of multi-stakeholder cooperation and engagement that have characterized the World Summit process since its inception and that are clearly recognized in the 2030 Agenda, and notes that many activities that support the objectives of the World Summit and the Sustainable Development Goals are being implemented by Governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, academic and technical communities and multi-stakeholder partnerships in their respective roles and responsibilities;

19. *Underscores* the importance of and encourages continued collaboration between the follow-up and review process of the World Summit and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, including its multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals;

20. *Takes note* of the reports of many United Nations entities submitted as input for the elaboration of the annual report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and published on the website of the Commission as mandated in Council resolution 2007/8 of 25 July 2007, and recalls the importance of close coordination among the leading action line facilitators and with the secretariat of the Commission;

21. *Notes* the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional level facilitated by the regional commissions, as observed in the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit at the regional and international levels, including the steps taken in this respect, and emphasizes the need to continue to address issues of specific interest to each region, focusing on the challenges and obstacles that each may be facing with regard to the implementation of all goals and principles established by the World Summit, with particular attention to information and communications technology for development;

22. *Reiterates* the importance of maintaining a process of coordinating the multi-stakeholder implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit through effective tools, with the goal of encouraging collaboration and partnership among all stakeholders, including international organizations, exchanging information among action line facilitators and other stakeholders, identifying issues that need improvement and discussing the modalities of reporting on the overall implementation process;

23. *Encourages* all stakeholders to continue to contribute information to the stocktaking database maintained by the International Telecommunication Union on the implementation of the goals established by the World Summit, and invites United Nations entities to update information on their initiatives in the database;

24. *Highlights* the urgent need for the incorporation of the recommendations contained in the outcome documents of the World Summit into the revised guidelines for United Nations country teams on preparing the common country assessments and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, including the addition of an information and communications technology for development component, for which the United Nations Group on the Information Society has offered its assistance;

25. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution 60/252 of 27 March 2006, in which the Assembly requested the Council to oversee the system-wide follow-up to the outcomes of the Geneva and Tunis phases of the World Summit;

26. *Also recalls* that, in its resolution 70/125, the General Assembly called for continuation of the annual reports on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit, through the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, to the Council, and reaffirms the role of the Commission, as set forth in Council resolution 2006/46, in assisting the Council as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up, in particular the review and assessment of progress made in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit;

27. *Calls upon* all States, in building the information society, to take steps to avoid and to refrain from taking any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impedes the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries and that hinders their well-being;

28. *Welcomes* the fact that the rapid growth in access to mobile telephony and broadband Internet has further accelerated during the pandemic, so that in 2023, 95 per cent of the world's population were living within range of a mobile broadband network and 5.4 billion people or 67 per cent of the world's population were using the Internet, in line with the World Summit targets; the value of this progress is enhanced by the advent of new electronic and mobile services and applications for health, agriculture, education, business, development, financial and government services, civic participation and transactional services, which offer great potential for the development of the information society;

29. *Notes with great concern* that many developing countries lack universal, meaningful and affordable access to information and communications technologies and that, for the majority of the poor, the promise of science and technology, including information and communications technologies, remains unfulfilled, and emphasizes the need to effectively harness technology, including information and communications technologies, data management, and promote digital literacy to bridge the digital and knowledge divides;

30. *Underlines* that efforts to promote access to information and communications technology, digital, media and information literacy, civic participation and online safety are important to bridge digital divides and ensure digital inclusion and the enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development;

31. *Expresses concern* that many forms of digital divides remain between and within countries and regions, and underlines the need for digital, media and information literacy as well as the need to address prevailing challenges to bridge digital divides, including through international cooperation and education, striving to ensure that individuals, especially persons in vulnerable situations, are able to connect to and access the Internet in a safe, secure and meaningful way so as to enable their full economic, political and social participation in an inclusive information society;

32. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies present new opportunities and challenges and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing the new technologies in an inclusive manner, such as sufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity, as well as issues related to technology ownership, standards and flows, and in this regard calls upon all stakeholders to provide adequate resources, enhanced capacity-building and transfer of technology and knowledge to developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and landlocked countries, towards a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy;

33. *Also recognizes* the rapid growth in broadband access networks, especially in developed countries, and underscores the need to urgently address the growing digital divides in the availability, affordability, quality of access and use of broadband between and within high-, middle- and low-income countries and other regions, with special emphasis on supporting the least developed countries, small island developing States and Africa as a continent;

34. *Further recognizes* that the transition to a mobile-led communications environment and emerging digital platforms and services is leading to significant changes in operators' business models and that it requires significant rethinking of the ways in which individuals and communities make use of networks and devices, of government strategies and of ways in which communications networks can be used to achieve development objectives;

35. *Recognizes* that, even with all the developments and the improvement observed in some respects, in numerous developing countries information and communications technologies and their applications are still not available to or affordable for the majority of people, particularly those living in rural areas;

36. *Also recognizes* that the number of Internet users is steadily increasing and that, in some instances, the digital divide and the knowledge divide are also changing in character, from a divide based on whether access is available to one based on the quality of access, information and skills that users can obtain and the value that they can derive therefrom, and recognizes in this regard that there is a need to prioritize the use of information and communications technologies through innovative approaches, including multi-stakeholder approaches, within national and regional development strategies;

37. *Emphasizes*, in this regard, the vital importance of multilingualism and local content but also the integrity of information in the information society, and urges all stakeholders to encourage the creation of, and access to, educational, cultural and scientific content online so as to promote meaningful access and ensure that all people and cultures can express themselves and have access to the Internet in all languages, including Indigenous languages in the context of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (2022–2032);

38. *Recognizes* the importance of human capacity-building, an enabling environment and resilient information and communications technology infrastructure, as well as fostering multi-stakeholder partnerships, and assistance to countries in their efforts to strengthen the enabling role of information and communications technology for the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals;

39. *Urges* a continued focus on maximizing development gains from e-commerce, through the eTrade for All initiative, which provides a new approach to trade development through electronic exchanges by allowing developing countries to more easily navigate the supply of technical assistance for building capacity in e-commerce readiness and by enabling donors to have a clear picture of the programmes that they could fund;

40. *Recognizes*, in this regard, that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development has initiated and implemented rapid e-trade readiness assessments of least developed countries in cooperation with other donors and organizations in order to raise awareness of opportunities and challenges related to leveraging e-commerce in the least developed countries;

41. *Recalls* the *Digital Economy Report 2021* of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, which examines the role of cross-border data flows for development in maximizing equitable development gains, while minimizing risks and impacts of a potential fragmentation in the digital space;

42. *Welcomes* the holding of the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on E-commerce and the Digital Economy, in Geneva from 6 to 8 May 2024, and of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development eWeek, from 4 to 8 December 2023;

43. *Takes note* of the latest global report of the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, entitled *The State of Broadband 2023: Digital Connectivity – A Transformative Opportunity*, and notes with interest the continuous efforts of the Broadband Commission in promoting high-level advocacy for the establishment of an enabling environment for affordable and reliable broadband connectivity, in particular through national broadband plans and public-private partnerships for ensuring that the development agenda challenges are met with appropriate impact and in conjunction with all stakeholders;

44. *Recalls* the launching of the Broadband Advocacy Targets by the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development to support "connecting the other half" and to help to bring online the 2.6 billion of the world's people who are not connected to the Internet;

45. *Recognizes* that the digital economy and emerging technologies have enormous potential for social good, the implementation of World Summit outcomes and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

46. *Also recognizes* the existing artificial intelligence and other digital divides between and within developed and developing countries in terms of conditions possibilities and capacities and the need to narrow these disparities;

47. *Welcomes* the many initiatives of United Nations organizations that support the implementation of the World Summit action lines, and encourages all action line facilitators to continue to work towards implementation of the action lines;

48. *Also welcomes* the work of the Information for All Programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which aims to assist Member States in formulating policies to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable knowledge societies, and further welcomes the holding of Global Media and Information Literacy Week, from 24 to 31 October each year;

49. *Further welcomes*, in this regard, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, adopted on 23 November 2021;[8]

50. *Notes* the significant developments in the information society with the emergence in the public sphere of artificial intelligence, which significantly advances the pace and scale with which artificial intelligence is expected to have an impact on

[8] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Forty-first Session, Paris, 9–24 November 2021*, vol. 1, *Resolutions*, annex VII.

many aspects of human societies, and also acknowledges concerns about the negative impacts of artificial intelligence, namely, on employment and information integrity;

51. *Also notes* the establishment by the Secretary-General of a multi-stakeholder High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence, takes note of its interim report, issued on 21 December 2023, and looks forward to its final report;

52. *Further notes* that the International Telecommunication Union has established partnerships with 40 other United Nations entities to convene the Artificial Intelligence for Good platform, including its summits and the launch of the International Telecommunication Union Artificial Intelligence Repository to identify responsible and practical applications of artificial intelligence to advance the Sustainable Development Goals;

53. *Recognizes* the work of the International Telecommunication Union, including, in particular, the holding of its Plenipotentiary Conference in Bucharest from 26 September to 14 October 2022, at which the membership reaffirmed its commitment to the common vision of a connected world;

54. *Recalls* the holding of the sixth World Telecommunication/Information and Communications Technology Policy Forum, organized by the International Telecommunication Union from 16 to 18 December 2021;

55. *Looks forward* to the holding of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, to be convened by the International Telecommunication Union in New Delhi from 15 to 24 October 2024, and the holding of the Global Standards Symposium, to be convened in New Delhi on 14 October 2024 by the International Telecommunication Union;

56. *Recalls* the holding of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, organized by the International Telecommunication Union in Kigali from 6 to 16 June 2022;

57. *Also recalls* the holding of the eighteenth World Telecommunication/Information and Communications Technology Indicators Symposium in Geneva on 3 and 4 July 2023 on the theme “Advancing the measurement agenda to achieve universal and meaningful connectivity”;

58. *Recognizes* the work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to promote digital inclusion and data and digital infrastructure in Africa and other regions to support poverty reduction and food security;

59. *Also recognizes* the work of the International Labour Organization on the impact on jobs caused by technological change, in particular the impact on women and persons in vulnerable situations;

60. *Further recognizes* the work of the Global Observatory for eHealth of the World Health Organization, including its consideration of how m-health, telehealth, electronic health records and e-learning can contribute to the goals of universal health coverage;

61. *Recognizes* the work of the United Nations Development Programme, including the publication of its Digital Strategy, which is aimed at applying the potential of digital technology to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and reiterates the importance of the United Nations Development Programme continuing to focus on such assistance and digital capacity development for countries, in particular developing countries, in collaboration with other relevant United Nations agencies;

62. *Also recognizes* the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, including its publication of the *Digital Initiatives for*

Indigenous Languages toolkit, which illustrates how Internet and other digital tools can be utilized to conserve, revive and promote Indigenous languages, as well as other minority languages;

63. *Further recognizes* the work of the Internet Governance Forum, including the development of its youth, national and regional initiatives, that support multi-stakeholder discussions on digital public policy;

64. *Recalls* the publication of the Secretary-General's strategy on new technologies on how the United Nations system will support the use of new technologies to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and to facilitate their alignment with the values enshrined in the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the norms and standards of international law;

65. *Reiterates* the commitment to harnessing the potential of information and communications technologies to achieve the 2030 Agenda and other internationally agreed development goals, noting that they can accelerate progress across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, accordingly urges all Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations, the technical and academic communities and all other relevant stakeholders to integrate information and communications technologies into their approaches to implementing the Goals, and requests United Nations system entities facilitating the World Summit action lines to review their reporting and workplans to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

66. *Notes with great concern* the persistence of the gender digital divide on a global level – as 65 per cent of women and girls are now using the Internet compared with 70 per cent of men – and that women remain digitally marginalized in many of the world's poorest countries, draws attention to the gender digital divide, which persists in women's and girls' access to and use of information and communications technologies, including in education, employment and other areas of economic and social development, and, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, calls upon member States and other stakeholders, as appropriate, to adopt all needed measures, especially by significantly enhancing women's and girls' education, as well as their participation in information and communications technologies, as users, content creators, employees, entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders, and by addressing technology-facilitated gender-based violence;

67. *Notes* the many initiatives targeted at closing the gender digital divide, including, among others, International Girls in ICT Day (International Telecommunication Union), the Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age (the EQUALS initiative), the EQUALS in Tech Awards (International Telecommunication Union and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women), the eTrade for Women Network (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), Women on the Homepage (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the Global Survey on Gender and Media (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), the Broadband Commission Working Group on Broadband and Gender, the Best Practice Forum on Gender and Access of the Internet Governance Forum, the work being done in the World Summit on the Information Society Forum on gender issues and the work of the World Bank in a number of countries promoting opportunities for women and girls in information and communications technologies, as well as the work of many other stakeholders on this issue;

68. *Reaffirms* the commitment to pay particular attention to the unique and emerging information and communications technology challenges facing all countries, in particular developing countries, as envisaged in the relevant paragraphs of General Assembly resolution 70/125;

69. *Notes with appreciation* the special initiatives and tracks launched under the World Summit on the Information Society Forum, in particular the Multi-stakeholder Alliance on ICTs and Older Persons, in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union, the World Health Organization and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and in alignment with the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing, and the Youth Campaigns;

70. *Notes* that, while a solid foundation for capacity-building in information and communications technology has been laid in many areas with regard to building the information society, there is still a need for continuing efforts to address the ongoing challenges, especially for developing countries and the least developed countries, and draws attention to the positive impact of broadened capacity development that involves institutions, organizations and entities dealing with information and communications technologies and Internet governance issues;

71. *Acknowledges* the 911 pledges in the International Telecommunication Union Partner2Connect Digital Coalition (also known as P2C), which aims to foster meaningful connectivity and digital transformation globally with a focus on developing countries, including landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, aligned with World Summit action lines and the Sustainable Development Goals;

72. *Recognizes* the need to focus on capacity-development policies and sustainable support to further enhance the impact of activities and initiatives at the national and local levels aimed at providing advice, services and support, with a view to building an inclusive, people-centred and development-oriented information society;

73. *Notes* that topics continue to emerge, such as e-environment applications and the contribution of information and communications technologies to early warning, mitigating and adapting to climate change, disaster response, social networking, cultural and linguistic diversity, virtualization and cloud computing and services, mobile Internet and mobile-based services, community networks, the gender digital divide, cyber, the protection of privacy and freedom of expression as defined in articles 17 and 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[9] and the empowerment and protection, especially against cyberexploitation and abuse, of vulnerable groups of society, in particular children and young people;

74. *Reaffirms* that, in the outcome document on the overall review of the implementation of the World Summit action lines, the General Assembly called for the World Summit on the Information Society Forum to be held annually,[10] and recognizes the value of the Forum in enhancing cooperation, partnership, innovation and the exchange of experiences and good practices by all stakeholders in information and communications technologies for sustainable development;

75. *Notes* the holding of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum 2023, hosted by the International Telecommunication Union and jointly organized by the Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Conference on

[9] See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[10] See General Assembly resolution 70/125.

Trade and Development from 13 to 17 March 2023, under the theme "WSIS action lines for building back better and accelerating the achievement of the SDGs", and l welcomes the holding of the WSIS+20 Forum High-level Event in Geneva, from 27 to 31 May 2024, and the open consultation process, which aims to ensure wide participation in and broad ownership of the Forum;

76. *Encourages* action line facilitators to use the Geneva Plan of Action[11] as the framework for identifying practical measures to use information and communications technologies to help to achieve the 2030 Agenda, noting the World Summit on the Information Society-Sustainable Development Goals matrix, developed by United Nations agencies;

77. *Encourages* World Summit action line facilitators to ensure close alignment with the 2030 Agenda when considering new work to implement the outcomes of the World Summit, according to their existing mandates and resources;

78. *Reiterates* the importance of the call by the General Assembly for all stakeholders to integrate information and communications technologies into approaches to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and its request to United Nations entities facilitating the World Summit action lines to review their reporting and workplans to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

79. *Encourages* active participation of entrepreneurs in the World Summit process and the Sustainable Development Goals, as called for in General Assembly resolution 77/160;

Internet governance

80. *Reaffirms* that the outcomes of the World Summit related to Internet governance, namely, the process towards enhanced cooperation and the convening of the Internet Governance Forum, are to be pursued by the Secretary-General through two distinct processes, and recognizes that the two processes may be complementary;

81. *Also reaffirms* paragraphs 34 to 37 and 67 to 72 of the Tunis Agenda;

82. *Further reaffirms* paragraphs 55 to 65 of General Assembly resolution 70/125;

Enhanced cooperation

83. *Recognizes* the importance of enhanced cooperation in the future to enable Governments, on an equal footing, to carry out their roles and responsibilities in international public policy issues pertaining to the Internet, but not in the day-to-day technical and operational matters that do not have an impact on international public policy issues;

84. *Recalls* the work of the Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation, established by the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/125, to develop recommendations on how to further implement enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda, and also notes that the Working Group ensured the full involvement of Governments and other relevant stakeholders, in particular from developing countries, taking into account all their diverse views and expertise;

85. *Also recalls* that the Working Group held five meetings between September 2016 and January 2018, at which it discussed inputs from Member States and other stakeholders, as stipulated by the General Assembly in its resolution 70/125;

[11] See A/C.2/59/3, annex.

86. *Further recalls* the report of the Chair of the Working Group,[12] which includes references to the full texts of all proposals and contributions, and expresses its gratitude to the Chair and all participants who submitted inputs and contributed to the work of the Working Group;

87. *Welcomes* the good progress made by the Working Group in many areas and the fact that consensus seemed to emerge on some issues, while significant divergence of views on a number of other issues persisted, and in that regard regrets that the Working Group could not find agreement on recommendations on how to further implement enhanced cooperation as envisioned in the Tunis Agenda;

Internet Governance Forum

88. *Recognizes* the importance of the Internet Governance Forum and its mandate as a forum for multi-stakeholder dialogue on various matters, as reflected in paragraph 72 of the Tunis Agenda, including discussion on public policy issues related to key elements of Internet governance;

89. *Recalls* the decision of the General Assembly, in its resolution 70/125, to extend the mandate of the Internet Governance Forum for a further 10 years, during which time the Forum should continue to show progress on working modalities and the participation of relevant stakeholders from developing countries;

90. *Recognizes* that over 155 national and regional Internet Governance Forum initiatives have emerged, taking place in all regions and addressing Internet governance issues of relevance and priority to the organizing country or region;

91. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution 70/125, in which the Assembly called upon the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, within its regular reporting, to give due consideration to fulfilment of the recommendations contained in the report of the Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum of the Commission;[13]

92. *Notes* the holding of the eighteenth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, organized in Kyoto, Japan, from 8 to 12 October 2023, under the theme "The Internet we want – empowering all people", which welcomed over 11,000 participants;

93. *Looks forward* to the holding of the nineteenth meeting of the Internet Governance Forum, to be organized in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 15 to 19 December 2024 under the theme "Building our multi-stakeholder digital future", and the continued implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development Working Group on Improvements to the Internet Governance Forum that are applicable for its preparatory process;

94. *Welcomes*, in that context, the continuous progress made with regard to the intersessional work of the Internet Governance Forum in the different modalities of connecting and enabling the next billion online, dynamic coalitions and best practice forums and policy networks, as well as the contributions of national and regional Internet governance forums, the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group and the Leadership Panel;

95. *Notes*, in that context, the establishment of the Leadership Panel of the Internet Governance Forum, as a step in implementing the Internet Governance

[12] See E/CN.16/2018/CRP.3.
[13] A/67/65-E/2012/48 and A/67/65/Corr.1-E/2012/48/Corr.1.

Forum Plus proposal presented in the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation;

The road ahead

96. *Calls upon* United Nations entities to continue to actively cooperate in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit through the United Nations system, to take the necessary steps and commit to a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society and to catalyse the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda;

97. *Calls upon* all stakeholders to keep the goal of bridging the digital divides, including the gender digital divide, and fostering digital inclusion, in their different forms, an area of priority concern, to put into effect sound strategies that contribute to the development of e-government and to continue to focus on pro-poor information and communications technology policies and applications in order to reach those in vulnerable situations, including access to reliable and affordable broadband at the grass-roots level, including through participative models, with a view to narrowing the digital divides among and within countries towards building information and knowledge societies;

98. *Recognizes* the importance of expanding participation of all countries, in particular developing countries, in digital transformation to harness the benefits and effectively participate in the development, deployment and use of emerging technologies, including safe, secure and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems, and the importance for the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to consider the impact and challenges of rapid technological changes and frontier technologies on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets;

99. *Invites* all stakeholders to take an active part in the WSIS+20 Forum High-level Event in Geneva, including the multi-stakeholder consultations on achievements, key trends, challenges and opportunities on World Summit action lines for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;

100. *Acknowledges* the challenges remaining for the full implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit, also acknowledges the challenges remaining for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and invites all stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of World Summit action lines to fulfil the objectives defined in the 10-year review process and advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

101. *Urges* all stakeholders to prioritize the development of innovative approaches that will stimulate the provision of universal, meaningful and affordable access to broadband infrastructure for developing countries and the use of relevant broadband services in order to ensure the development of an inclusive, development-oriented and people-centred information society, and to minimize the digital divides, including the gender digital divide;

102. *Calls upon* all stakeholders to promote an enabling policy environment for investment and to foster public-private cooperation and partnership for sustainable investment in information and communications technology infrastructure, applications and services, content and digital skills, with the aim of ensuring the meaningful connectivity needed to advance the Sustainable Development Goals;

103. *Calls upon* international and regional organizations to continue to assess and report on a regular basis on the universal accessibility of nations to information and communications technologies, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities

for the growth of the information and communications technology sectors of developing countries;

104. *Recognizes* that, in line with paragraph 4 above, financing of information and communications technologies for development needs to be placed in the context of the growing importance of the role of information and communications technologies, not only as a medium of communication, but also as a development enabler, and as a tool for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Sustainable Development Goals;

105. *Urges* all countries to make concrete efforts to fulfil their commitments under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[14] with special attention to the needs of developing countries;

106. *Reiterates* the importance of information and communications technology indicators in open data format as a monitoring and evaluation tool for measuring the digital divide among countries and within societies and in informing decision makers when formulating policies and strategies for social, cultural and economic development, emphasizes the importance of the standardization and harmonization of reliable and regularly updated indicators, and stresses the value of gender-disaggregated data to contribute to the bridging of the gender digital divide;

107. *Calls upon* all countries to encourage the inclusiveness of innovation, especially with regard to local communities, women, persons with disabilities, older persons and youth, and to ensure that the scaling and diffusion of new technologies are inclusive and do not create further divides;[15]

108. *Acknowledges* the importance of digital measurement and monitoring tools that support the deployment and measurement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

109. *Encourages* the development and implementation of robust legal frameworks, policies and data protection and accountability measures to foster privacy by design across technologies and services, and highlights the importance of enabling cross-border data flows and data free flow with trust, while respecting applicable legal frameworks in this context, and reaffirming the role of data for development;

110. *Calls upon* all stakeholders to promote digital literacy and awareness-raising efforts to empower individuals, especially those in vulnerable situations, to understand and exercise their data protection and privacy rights, make informed choices about their personal data and take appropriate steps to safeguard their online security and privacy;

111. *Reiterates* the importance of sharing best practices at all levels, and, while recognizing excellence in the implementation of the projects and initiatives that further the goals of the World Summit, encourages all stakeholders to nominate their projects for the annual World Summit prizes as an integral part of the World Summit stocktaking process, while taking note of the report on the World Summit success stories;

112. *Calls upon* United Nations organizations and other relevant organizations and forums, in accordance with the outcomes of the World Summit, to periodically review the methodologies for information and communications technology indicators, taking into account different levels of development and national circumstances, and therefore:

[14] General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.
[15] A/78/213.

(a) Encourages Member States to develop and put in place data infrastructure at the national level on information and communications technologies, to share information about country case studies and to collaborate with other countries in capacity-building exchange programmes;

(b) Encourages United Nations organizations and other relevant organizations and forums to promote assessment of the impact of information and communications technologies on sustainable development;

(c) Notes with appreciation the work of the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communications Technology for Development and the *Measuring Digital Development* series, which provides information on recent trends and statistics on access to and the affordability of information and communications technologies and the evolution of the information and knowledge societies worldwide, including the Information and Communications Technology Development Index;

(d) Encourages the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communications Technology for Development to continue the follow-up on the relevant decisions of the Statistical Commission on information and communications technology statistics for the purposes of producing high-quality and timely information and communications technology statistics and of leveraging the potential benefits of using big data for official statistics;

113. *Invites* the international community to make voluntary contributions to the special trust fund established by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to support the review and assessment work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development regarding follow-up to the World Summit, while acknowledging with appreciation the financial support provided by the Governments of Finland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to this fund;

114. *Recalls* the proposal in General Assembly resolution 70/125 that the Assembly hold a high-level meeting on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit in 2025, welcomes the road map outlining the contributions of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to the overall review, and encourages willing Member States to provide financial or other support for its implementation;

115. *Takes note with appreciation* of the two road maps developed by the International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization towards their preparation for the World Summit 20-year review;

116. *Requests* the Commission on Science and Technology for Development to collect inputs from member States, all facilitators and other stakeholders and to organize, during its twenty-eighth session, in 2025, substantive discussions on the progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit during the past 20 years, and to report thereon, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly;

117. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General and the related discussion of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at its twenty-seventh session, and acknowledges the role of the Commission as the focal point for the system-wide follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit;

118. *Emphasizes* the importance of promoting an inclusive information society, with particular attention to bridging the digital and broadband divides, taking into

account the considerations of developing countries, gender and culture, as well as youth and other underrepresented groups;

119. *Calls for* continued dialogue and work on the implementation of enhanced cooperation as envisaged in the Tunis Agenda;

120. *Highlights* the ongoing discussions on the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Road map for digital cooperation" and the proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Our Common Agenda",[16] including the global digital compact, relevant to the World Summit on the Information Society, and in this regard looks forward to continuing consultations and engagements towards a global digital compact consistent with the World Summit outcomes, and underlines the importance of ensuring synergies and avoiding duplication across various entities;

121. *Also highlights*, in this regard, the well-established role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as an intergovernmental platform for discussions on the impact and opportunities of technologies for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

122. *Stresses* the need for an ongoing open, inclusive and transparent process for the negotiations of the World Summit 20-year review and follow-up in Geneva that should include informal consultations with Member States, observers and stakeholders;

123. *Also stresses*, in regard to the above, the aim to maximize benefits from technologies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, and re-emphasizes the notion of leaving no one behind, which is the central transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda;

124. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, on a yearly basis, a report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the present resolution as well as in the other Council resolutions on the assessment of the quantitative and qualitative progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

[16] A/75/982.

Draft resolution II
Science, technology and innovation for development

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the role of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development as the United Nations torch-bearer for science, technology and innovation for development, and as the United Nations focal point for science, technology and innovation for development, in analysing how science, technology and innovation, including information and communications technologies, serve as enablers of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[1] by acting as a forum for strategic planning, sharing lessons learned and best practices, providing foresight about critical trends in science, technology and innovation in key sectors of the economy, the environment and society, and drawing attention to new and emerging technologies,

Recognizing also the critical role and contribution of science, technology and innovation in building and maintaining national competitiveness in the global economy, addressing global challenges and realizing sustainable development,

Recognizing further the seminal role that information and communications technologies play in promoting and empowering science, technology and innovation as enablers of development,

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome[2] and General Assembly resolution 70/125 of 16 December 2015, entitled "Outcome document of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society", in which it was recognized that science and technology, including information and communications technologies, are vital for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, and reaffirming the commitments contained therein,

Recalling also the entry into force, on 4 November 2016, of the Paris Agreement,[3]

Recalling further that, in its resolution 78/153 of 19 December 2023, the General Assembly acknowledged that action on adaptation to climate change is an urgent priority and a global challenge faced by all countries, especially those that are vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change, and emphasized the urgency of scaling up action and support, including finance, capacity-building and technology transfer, to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change in line with the best available science, taking into account the priorities and needs of developing countries,

Noting with great concern the severe negative and dramatic impact on human health, global poverty and inequality, safety and well-being caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the severe disruption to societies and economies and the devastating impact on lives and livelihoods, and that the poorest and most vulnerable are the hardest hit by the pandemic,

Reaffirming, after the COVID-19 pandemic, the ambition to get back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by designing and implementing sustainable and inclusive recovery strategies to accelerate progress towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to help to reduce the risk of and build resilience to future shocks, crises and pandemics,

[1] General Assembly resolution 70/1.
[2] General Assembly resolution 60/1.
[3] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

including by funding, strengthening health systems and achieving universal health coverage, and recognizing that equitable and timely access for all to safe, quality, effective and affordable COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics are an essential part of a global response based on unity, solidarity, renewed multilateral cooperation and the principle of leaving no one behind,

Recalling that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development is the secretariat of the Commission,

Recognizing that the General Assembly, in its resolutions 76/213 of 17 December 2021 and 78/160 of 19 December 2023 on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development, encouraged the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to continue to undertake science, technology and innovation policy reviews, with a view to assisting developing countries in identifying the priorities and measures that are needed to integrate science, technology and innovation policies into their national development strategies and ensuring that such policies and programmes are supportive of national development agendas,

Recalling Economic and Social Council decision 2021/254 of 22 July 2021 providing for the extension, until 2025, of the mandate of the Gender Advisory Board of the Commission, as well as General Assembly resolutions 70/132 of 17 December 2015 and 70/213 and 70/219 of 22 December 2015 addressing, respectively, the barriers to equal access for women and girls to science and technology and the integration of a gender perspective into development policies and programmes,

Noting with concern the existing disparities between developed and developing countries in terms of conditions, possibilities and capacities to produce new scientific and technological knowledge, and emphasizing that science, technology and innovation cooperation and collaboration as well as international support are fundamental to enhancing developing countries' ability to benefit from technological advances and to produce, nurture, access, comprehend, select, adapt and use science, technology and innovation knowledge,

Recalling the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work, adopted by the Commission at its sixty-first session,[4] in which it, inter alia, highlighted the need for managing technological and digital change for women's economic empowerment, particularly to strengthen their capacities, including the institutional capacities of developing countries, so as to enable women to leverage science and technology for entrepreneurship and economic empowerment in the changing world of work,

Recalling also the outcome document of the forum entitled "Investment in women and girls in science for inclusive green growth", held in New York on 11 and 12 February 2019 to commemorate the International Day of Women and Girls in Science,[5]

Recalling further the work of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on applying a gender lens to science, technology and innovation at the workshop held in Vienna on 18 January 2019, and during the twenty-fourth session of the Commission on 21 May 2021, as well as the work of the Commission to address the participation of women in science, technology and innovation from a development perspective, including its work in partnership with Okayama University on the young female researcher, as well as seminars and workshops on science, technology and

[4] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2017, Supplement No. 7* (E/2017/27), chap. I, sect. A.
[5] A/73/798, annex I.

innovation organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as the secretariat of the Commission,

Taking note of the importance for science, technology and innovation development policies and programmes to address various aspects of the digital divides, particularly the gender digital divide, as addressed by the EQUALS global partnership and the #eSkills4Girls initiative of the Group of 20,

Encouraging initiatives that promote the role of women in science, technology and innovation in developing countries, including the L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science Awards, the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World Early Career Fellowships for women and the African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence for women,

Recognizing that capabilities, such as basic education and science, technology, engineering and mathematics, design, management and entrepreneurial skills, are central for effective innovation, but are unevenly distributed across and within countries and regions, and that the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality education in science, technology and mathematics at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels are essential and should be funded, promoted, prioritized and coordinated, in order to create an inclusive social environment conducive to the advancement of science, technology and innovation,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which the Assembly adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets,

Recognizing the instrumental role of science, technology and innovation, along with information and communications technologies, in the achievement of a number of Sustainable Development Goals, and therefore highlighting their role as enablers of the 2030 Agenda to continue to address global challenges,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, and recalling also the establishment of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism,

Highlighting the contribution that the Commission on Science and Technology for Development can make to the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, bearing in mind its mandate to foster multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships through the sharing of information, experiences, best practices and policy advice among Member States, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, academia, United Nations entities and other relevant stakeholders for achieving Sustainable Development Goals supported by science, technology and innovation,

Recalling that, in its resolution 72/228 of 20 December 2017, the General Assembly encouraged the Commission to promote, in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, international cooperation in the field of science and technology for development,

Recalling also that, in the same resolution, the General Assembly encouraged the Commission to discuss and explore innovative financing models as a means of attracting new stakeholders**,** innovators and sources of investment capital for science, technology, engineering and innovation-based solutions, in collaboration with other organizations, at the regional and multilateral levels as appropriate,

Noting that rapid technological change can contribute to the faster achievement of the 2030 Agenda by improving real incomes, enabling faster and wider deployment of novel solutions to economic, social and environmental obstacles, supporting more

inclusive forms of participation in social and economic life, bridging the digital divides in all their forms, replacing environmentally costly modes of production with more sustainable ones and giving policymakers powerful tools to design and plan development interventions,

Noting also that new technologies create new jobs and development opportunities, thus increasing the demand for digital skills and competencies, and underlining the importance of building digital skills and competencies so that societies can adapt to and benefit from relevant technological changes,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 72/242 of 22 December 2017, 73/17 of 26 November 2018, 75/316 of 17 August 2021 and 77/320 of 25 July 2023, in which the Assembly requested the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the Commission, through the Economic and Social Council, to give due consideration to the impact of key rapid technological changes on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals within their respective mandates and existing resources,

Welcoming the work of the Commission on its two current priority themes, "Data for development" and "Global cooperation in science, technology and innovation for development",

Recalling the framework for national science, technology and innovation policy reviews that has been developed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to assist countries in better aligning science, technology and innovation policies with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals,[6]

Recognizing the need for innovative approaches that respond to the needs of the poorest, marginalized and grass-roots communities, including those in vulnerable situations, in developing and developed countries, while protecting their personal data from misuse and respecting the ownership of personal data, that involve them in innovation processes and that embed capacity-building in the areas of science, technology and innovation as a crucial component of national development plans, inter alia, through collaboration between the relevant ministries and regulatory bodies**,**

Recognizing also the importance of data protection and privacy in the context of science and technology for development,

Recognizing further that technology foresight and assessment exercises, including gender-sensitive and environmentally sensitive technologies, could help policymakers and stakeholders in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the identification of challenges and opportunities that can be addressed strategically, and that technology trends should be analysed, keeping in view the wider socioeconomic context,

Recognizing that well-developed innovation and digital ecosystems[7] play a fundamental role in the effective digital development and facilitation of science, technology and innovation,

Recognizing also the increased regional integration efforts across the world and the associated regional dimension of science, technology and innovation issues,

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, entitled "The future we want",[8] including the principles referred to therein,

[6] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, document UNCTAD/DTL/STICT/2019/4.

[7] The digital ecosystem involves components such as technological infrastructure, data infrastructure, financial infrastructure, institutional infrastructure and human infrastructure.

[8] General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

Recognizing the need to renew commitments to mobilize and scale up financing for innovation, especially in developing countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States in support of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing also that people around the world are affected by shocks, from economic crises to health emergencies, from social conflicts and war to disasters caused by natural hazards, and that these shocks have a severe impact on the progress towards achieving sustainable development,

Recalling that, in its resolution 74/306 of 11 September 2020, the General Assembly called upon Member States and all relevant stakeholders to promote research and development and capacity-building initiatives, as well as to enhance cooperation on and access to science, innovation, technologies, technical assistance and knowledge-sharing, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, especially with developing countries, in a collaborative, coordinated and transparent manner in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and towards advancing the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing the intricate relationship between data and sustainable development and the complexity of data governance,

Taking into account the importance of international cooperation in science, technology and innovation to achieve the international community's commitment to sustainable development and leaving no one behind, and the role of global partnerships in facilitating the co-creation of global solutions to tackling global challenges,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 78/259 of 9 January 2024 on the International Day of Science, Technology and Innovation for the South, in particular its call upon the international community to foster an open, fair, inclusive and non-discriminatory environment for scientific and technological development and cooperation, as well as to support the efforts of all countries, including those of the global South, to develop and strengthen their national science, technology and innovation systems,

Recognizing the contribution of science, technology and innovation in building resilient communities by empowering and giving a voice to people, including those in vulnerable situations, through, among others, extending access to education and health, monitoring environmental and social risks, connecting people, enabling early warning systems, driving economic diversification, and economic development, while considering negative effects on the environment,

Noting the significant achievements and continuing potential contribution of science, technology and innovation and information and communications technologies to human welfare, economic prosperity and employment,

Noting also that science, technology and innovation policies must be aligned to address the three dimensions of sustainable development, specifically, economic development, social progress and environmental protection,

Taking into consideration that traditional knowledge can be a basis for technological development and the sustainable management and use of natural resources,

Encouraging the design and implementation of public policies that address the impact of rapid technological change on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Noting that the success of using technology and innovation policies at the national level is facilitated by, among other things, creating policy environments that enable education and research institutions, businesses and industry to innovate, invest in and transform science, technology and innovation into employment and economic growth, incorporating all interrelated elements, including knowledge transfer and financial and technical assistance support,

Noting also various ongoing and future initiatives related to science, technology and innovation to explore needs and priorities related to issues associated with the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recommends the following for consideration by national Governments, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development:

(a) Governments, individually and collectively, are encouraged to take into account the findings of the Commission and to consider taking the following actions:

(i) To establish a close link between science, technology, innovation and sustainable development strategies, giving a prominent place to institutional, infrastructure and human resource capacity-building in information and communication technologies and science, technology and innovation in the future vision and planning of national development;

(ii) To promote local innovation capabilities for inclusive and sustainable economic development by bringing together local scientific, vocational and engineering knowledge, mobilizing resources from multiple channels, improving core information and communications technology and supporting infrastructure development, including smart infrastructure, through collaboration with and among national programmes;

(iii) To encourage and support the science, technology and innovation efforts leading to the development of infrastructure and policies that support the global expansion of information and communications technology infrastructure, products and services, including broadband Internet access, to all people, particularly women, girls and youth, and persons with special needs and from remote and rural communities, catalysing multi-stakeholder efforts to accelerate the growth in the number of new Internet users and endeavouring to improve the affordability of such products and services;

(iv) To undertake systemic research, including gender-sensitive aspects, for foresight exercises, on new trends in science, technology and innovation, and information and communications technologies and their impact on development, particularly in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(v) To work, with input from a variety of stakeholders, including appropriate United Nations agencies and all relevant entities and forums, such as the Commission and the multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, to formulate, adopt and implement science, technology and innovation policies aimed at contributing to the implementation of the Goals;

(vi) To continue giving due consideration to the impact of key rapid technological changes on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals within their respective mandates and existent resources, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 72/242, 73/17, 75/316 and 77/320;

(vii) To use strategic foresight exercises to identify potential gaps or constraints in education for the medium and long terms and address such gaps with a policy

mix, including taking into account the specific needs of women and girls in the promotion of gender-responsive science, technology, engineering and mathematics education, vocational training and digital and data literacy;

(viii) To use strategic foresight as a process to encourage structured debate among all stakeholders, including representatives of government, science, industry and civil society and the private sector, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, towards creating a shared understanding of long-term issues, such as the changing nature of work and building consensus on future policies, and to help to meet current and emerging demands for competence and adaptation to change;

(ix) To incorporate the provision of digital competencies, including but not limited to entrepreneurship and complementary soft skills, in technical and vocational education and training and formal education curricula and lifelong learning initiatives, while taking into consideration best practices, local contexts and needs, and ensuring broad and up-to-date technological knowledge and that education is technology-neutral;

(x) To develop collaborative mechanisms to strengthen research and development networks and cooperation among different actors as well as to encourage an interdisciplinary approach to science cooperation, and to incentivize technology and knowledge transfer among universities, research institutes and the private sector, including at the international level;

(xi) To foster an open, fair and inclusive environment for scientific and technological development and cooperation;

(xii) To undertake strategic foresight initiatives on global and regional challenges at regular intervals and cooperate towards the establishment of a mapping system to review and share technology foresight outcomes, including pilot projects, with other Member States, making use of existing regional mechanisms, and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders;

(xiii) To conduct technology assessment and foresight exercises as a process to encourage structured debate among all stakeholders towards creating a shared understanding of the implications of rapid technological change;

(xiv) To encourage the review of progress on integrating science, technology and innovation into the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(xv) To conduct assessments of national innovation systems, including digital ecosystems, taking into account the needs of women and girls, and gender-sensitive aspects, drawing from foresight exercises, at regular intervals, to identify weaknesses in the systems and make effective policy interventions to strengthen their weaker components, and share outcomes with other Member States, and, on a voluntary basis, to provide financial support and expertise towards the implementation of the framework for national science, technology and innovation policy reviews in interested developing countries;

(xvi) To encourage digital natives to play a key role in a community-based approach, including gender-responsive approaches, to science, technology and innovation capacity-building, and facilitate the use of information and communications technologies in the context of the 2030 Agenda;

(xvii) To put in place policies that support the development of digital ecosystems, bearing in mind the potential of emerging digital technologies to leapfrog existing technologies for development, that are inclusive and take into account the socioeconomic and political context of countries and attract and support private investment and innovation, particularly encouraging the

development of local content and entrepreneurship and making available disaggregated data sources for science, technology and innovation;

(xviii) To implement initiatives and programmes that encourage and facilitate sustainable investment and participation in the digital economy;

(xix) To collaborate with all relevant stakeholders, promote the application of information and communications technologies in all sectors, improve environmental sustainability, encourage the creation, reuse and sharing of suitable facilities to recycle and dispose of e-waste and promote sustainable consumption and production patterns;

(xx) To promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics education and statistical literacy, particularly among female students, while also recognizing the importance of complementary soft skills, such as entrepreneurship, by encouraging mentoring and supporting other efforts to attract and retain women and girls in those fields, as well as mainstreaming a gender perspective when developing and implementing policies that harness science, technology and innovation;

(xxi) To support the policies and activities of developing countries in the fields of science and technology through North-South as well as South-South cooperation, as complementary to but not substituting for each other, by encouraging financial and technical assistance, capacity-building, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and conditions and technical training programmes or courses;

(xxii)To encourage countries to progressively increase the rate of generation of high-quality skilled human resources at all levels by providing an environment for building a critical mass of human resource capacity, harnessing and effectively participating in the application of science, technology and innovation for value addition activities, in different sectors, solving problems and enhancing human welfare, while fostering an enabling environment for improved career prospects and work conditions;

(xxiii)To increase support for research and development activities on rapid technological change and ensure the coherence of science, technology and innovation policies and strategies on rapid technological change with the broader national development agenda;

(xxiv)To consider engaging in an inclusive global discourse about all aspects of rapid technological change and its impact on sustainable development;

(xxv) To promote comprehensive policies that ensure the safety and ethical use of data, and robust cybersecurity practices;

(xxvi) To support policies that increase financial inclusion and deepen the sources of financing and direct investments towards innovations that address the Sustainable Development Goals;

(xxvii) To encourage the inclusiveness of innovation, especially with regard to local and marginalized communities, women, youth, older persons and people with special needs, to ensure that the scaling and diffusion of new technologies are inclusive and do not create further divides;

(xxviii) To support the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries as a mechanism to improve the scientific research and innovation base of least developed countries, promote networking among researchers and research institutions, help least developed countries to gain access to and utilize critical technologies, draw together bilateral initiatives and support by multilateral

institutions and the private sector and implement projects that contribute to the use of science, technology and innovation for economic development in least developed countries;

(b) The Commission is encouraged:

(i) To continue its role as a torch-bearer for science, technology and innovation and to provide high-level advice to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on relevant science, technology, engineering and innovation issues, and in this regard to contribute to informing the high-level thematic debate on the topic of the impact of rapid technological change on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, to be convened by the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, and to the discussion of progress made in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 75/316 and 77/320 at its seventy-ninth session;

(ii) To help to articulate the important role of information and communications technologies and science, technology and innovation as enablers in the 2030 Agenda by acting as a forum for strategic planning, providing foresight about critical trends in science, technology and innovation in key sectors of the economy and drawing attention to new and emerging technologies;

(iii) To consider how its work aligns with, feeds into and complements other international forums on science, technology and innovation and efforts supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

(iv) To raise awareness and facilitate networking and partnerships among various technology foresight organizations and networks, in collaboration with other stakeholders;

(v) To promote, in the spirit of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[9] international cooperation in the field of science and technology for development, including capacity-building and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and conditions;

(vi) To raise awareness among policymakers about the process of innovation and to identify particular opportunities for developing countries to benefit from such innovation, with special attention being placed on new trends in innovation that can offer novel possibilities for developing countries;

(vii) To support multi-stakeholder collaboration in policy learning capacity-building and technology development, including to support the participation of actors in the innovation systems of Member States in international networks and programmes to continue to build their capacity in innovation;

(viii) To support efforts to build capacity to develop, use and deploy new and existing technologies, based on needs, in developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries;

(ix) To proactively strengthen and revitalize global science, technology and innovation partnerships for sustainable development, which would entail the engagement of the Commission in (a) translating technology foresight into elaborating the scope of specific international projects for targeted research, technology development and deployment and initiatives for building human resource capacity for science, technology and innovation; and (b) exploring innovative financing models and other resources contributing to enhancing the

[9] General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

capacities of developing countries in collaborative projects and initiatives in science, technology and innovation;

(x) To explore ways and means of conducting international technology assessments and foresight exercises on existing, new and emerging technologies and their implications for sustainable development and building resilient communities, including discussions about models of governance for new areas of scientific and technological development;

(xi) To support countries in their efforts to identify future trends in terms of capacity-building needs, including through foresight exercises;

(xii) To discuss and explore innovative financing models, such as impact investment, as a means to attract new stakeholders, innovators and sources of investment capital for science, technology, engineering and innovation-based solutions, in collaboration with other organizations, where appropriate;

(xiii) To promote cooperation through the conduct of capacity-building and research and development initiatives among Member States, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including appropriate United Nations agencies, working to facilitate the strengthening of innovation systems that support innovators, particularly in developing countries, to boost their efforts to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;

(xiv) To provide a forum for sharing not only success stories and best practices, but also failures, key challenges and learning from the results of foresight exercises, successful local innovation models, case studies and experience on the use of science, technology and engineering for innovation, including the application of new emerging technologies, in symbiotic relationship with information and communications technologies, for inclusive and sustainable development, and to share findings with all relevant United Nations entities, including through the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and its multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals;

(xv) To continue to play an active role in creating awareness of the potential contribution of science, technology and innovation to the 2030 Agenda through substantive inputs, as appropriate, to relevant processes and bodies of the United Nations, and to share findings and good practices on science, technology and innovation among Member States and beyond;

(xvi) To highlight the importance of the work of the Commission related to the implementation of and follow-up to the areas of information and communications technologies and science, technology and innovation related to the Sustainable Development Goals, with the Chair of the Commission to report at appropriate reviews and meetings of the Economic and Social Council, the high-level political forum on sustainable development and other relevant forums;

(xvii) To strengthen and deepen collaboration between the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the Commission on the Status of Women, including sharing good practices and lessons learned in integrating a gender perspective into science, technology and innovation policymaking and implementation, and, in this context, to follow up on the work done by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at the workshop on applying a gender lens to science, technology and innovation, held in Vienna on 18 January 2019;

(xviii) To play an active role in creating awareness of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries;

(xix) To consider establishing a dedicated working group within the Commission that would engage in a comprehensive and inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue on the fundamental principles of data governance at all levels, as relevant for development, under the auspices of the United Nations, taking into account the conclusion of the negotiations on the outcomes of the Summit of the Future, including the Global Digital Compact;

(c) The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development is encouraged:

(i) To seek funding proactively for the expansion of science, technology and innovation policy reviews, with an emphasis on the critical role of information and communications technologies in empowering science, technology and innovation and engineering capacity-building and utilization, and the implementation of the recommendations on those reviews, as appropriate, in close cooperation with United Nations agencies and international organizations;

(ii) To look into the feasibility of including elements of strategic foresight and digital ecosystem assessment in policy reviews of science, technology and innovation and information and communications technologies, possibly by including a chapter dedicated to these themes;

(iii) To implement as widely as possible its framework for national science, technology and innovation policy reviews in order to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals, including a specific focus on bottom-of-the-pyramid approaches to innovation, and on social inclusion;

(iv) To plan for periodic updates on progress made in countries for which science, technology and innovation policy reviews have been performed and to invite those countries to report to the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on progress made, lessons learned and challenges encountered in implementing recommendations;

(v) To request the Gender Advisory Board of the Commission to provide inputs to the policy deliberations and documentation of the Commission, to report on progress at the annual sessions of the Commission and to better integrate a gender perspective into science, technology and innovation policy reviews;

(vi) To highlight the appreciation of the Commission for the contribution of the Gender Advisory Board to the discussions of the twenty-seventh session of the Commission, in particular at the high-level panel on data for development;

(vii) To encourage Governments to use the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries as a mechanism to support science, technology and innovation in least developed countries and to assist least developed countries to further develop their own technologies;

(viii) To continue to provide support for the States members of the Commission in their joint initiatives aimed at promoting science, technology and innovation in line with the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

B. Draft decision for adoption by the Council

2. The Commission also recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its twenty-seventh session and provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission

The Economic and Social Council:

(a) Takes note of the report of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development on its twenty-seventh session;[1]

(b) Approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission as set out below:

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

2. Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels, including the 20-year review thereof.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

3. Science and technology for development: priority themes:

(a) Diversifying economies in a world of accelerated digitalization;

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

(b) Technology foresight and technology assessment for sustainable development.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General

4. Report on technical cooperation activities in science, technology and innovation following Commission outcomes.

5. Election of the Chair and other officers for the twenty-ninth session of the Commission.

6. Provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-ninth session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-eighth session.

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2024, Supplement No. 11* (E/2024/31).

Chapter II
Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels

3. The Commission considered agenda item 2 at its 5th meeting, on 17 April 2024. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels (A/79/62-E/2024/3);

(b) Summary report prepared by the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on the intersessional panel meeting held in Lisbon, on 6 and 7 November 2023 (E/CN.16/2024/CRP.1).

4. At its 5th meeting, on 17 April, the Commission held a high-level panel discussion, which was moderated by the Vice-Chair (Hungary).

5. At the same meeting, the Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD and Head of the secretariat of the Commission introduced the report of the Secretary-General. This was followed by a presentation by the Head of the Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Development Branch in the Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD, who introduced the outline of the upcoming report of the secretariat on the 20-year review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

6. Presentations were made by the following four panellists: Deputy Director, International Relations at the Federal Office of Communications of Switzerland, Jorge Cancio; Chair, Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group Internet Governance Forum, Carol Roach; Chief, Strategic Planning and Membership, and Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Nur Sulyna Abdullah; and Chief, Digital Policies and Digital Transformation, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Cédric Wachholz.

7. The following participants took part in the special ministerial segment: Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Saqib Bhatti; Minister of Communications and Digital Economy of the Gambia, Ousman A. Bah; Secretary of the Department of Information and Communications Technology of the Philippines, Ivan John E. Uy; First Vice-Minister, Ministry of Communications of Cuba, Wilfredo González Vidal; Deputy Minister of Information, Communication and Information Technology of the United Republic of Tanzania, Maryprisca Winfred Mahundi; and Chief Executive Officer of the Tunisian Internet Agency (Tunisie Internet), Sihem Trabelsi. In the interactive discussion that followed, interventions were made by the representatives of Belarus, Austria, the Russian Federation, Japan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt, the observer for Islamic Republic of Iran and the representative for Progressive Communications, to which the panellists responded.

8. At the same meeting, an informal discussion was held on the global digital compact. A briefing was provided by a representative of the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Technology, Isabel De Sola Criado. The briefing was followed by questions and comments by the representatives of the United Kingdom, Cuba, Switzerland, the Russian Federation and Saudi Arabia and by the observers for Belgium, on behalf of the European Union, and Indonesia, to which the representative of the Office of the Envoy responded.

Action taken by the Commission

Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society

9. At its closing plenary meeting, on 19 April, the Commission had before it a draft resolution entitled “Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society”, submitted by the Chair on the basis of informal consultations facilitated by the Vice-Chair (Hungary) and circulated in an informal paper in English only.

10. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of the United States of America.

11. The Commission adopted the draft resolution and recommended it to the Council for adoption (see chap. I, sect. A, draft resolution I).

Chapter III
Science and technology for development

Priority themes:

(a) Data for development

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

12. The Commission considered agenda item 3 at its 2nd to 4th meetings, on 15 and 16 April 2024. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on data for development (E/CN.16/2024/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on global cooperation in science, technology and innovation for development (E/CN.16/2024/3);

(c) Report on the intersessional panel meeting held in Lisbon, on 6 and 7 November 2023 (E/CN.16/2024/CRP.1).

13. At its 2nd meeting, on 15 April, the Commission held a high-level panel discussion on the second priority theme, "Global cooperation on science, technology and innovation for development", which was moderated by the Chair.

14. At the same meeting, the Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD and Head of the secretariat of the Commission introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the second priority theme (E/CN.16/2024/3).

15. Presentations were made by the following panellists: Global Director, Digital and Data, and Executive Director, CGIAR System Organization, Khuloud Odeh; Deputy Director General, ITER International Fusion Energy Organization, Delong Luo; and Director, Science, Technology and Innovation, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Jerry Sheehan.

16. The following participants took part in the special ministerial segment of the 2nd meeting: Undersecretary for Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology of the Philippines, Leah J. Buendia; Science and Technology Adviser to the Secretary of State of the United States, Patricia Gruber; Deputy Head of the Vice-Presidency for Policy Making and Development, Science, Innovation and Knowledge-Based Economy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahdi Elyasi; and Assistant Minister of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of Serbia, Ivana Vukasinovic.

17. In the general discussion that followed, interventions were made by the representatives of the Gambia, Belarus, the Russian Federation, Uzbekistan, the United States, Austria, Brazil, Paraguay, Peru, Saudi Arabia and the observers for Pakistan and the State of Palestine. An intervention was also made by a member of the Gender Advisory Board of the Commission, Sophia Huyer. Concluding remarks were made by the panellists.

18. At its 3rd meeting, on 16 April, the Commission held a high-level panel discussion on the first priority theme, "Data for development", which was moderated by the Vice-Chair (Gambia).

19. At the same meeting, the Director of the Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD and Head of the secretariat of the Commission introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the first priority theme (E/CN.16/2024/2).

20. Presentations were made by the following panellists: co-founder, Wadhwani AI, Sunil Wadhwani; Strategic Partnership Lead, OpenAI, Asif Bhatti; Chair of the Working Group on Science and Technology at the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Denis

Naughten; professor of Practice at King's College London, Sana Khareghani; and founding Director, International Research Center for AI Ethics and Governance, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Yi Zeng.

21. The following participants took part in the special ministerial segment of the 3rd meeting: Minister of High Education, Science, Technology and Innovation of Angola, Maria Do Rosário Bragança Sambo; Minister of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry of Seychelles, Devika Vidot; Undersecretary for Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology of the Philippines, Leah J. Buendia; Deputy Permanent Secretary (Technical), Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology of the Gambia, Mucktarr Darboe; and Minister of Knowledge Economy, Start-ups and Micro-enterprises of Algeria, Yacine El-Mahdi Oualid. The special ministerial segment was followed by remarks made by two discussants: the member of the Gender Advisory Board, Ms. Huyer; and the co-founder of Kwame AI and a postdoctoral researcher at ETH Zürich (Switzerland), George Boateng.

22. An interactive discussion ensued, during which interventions were made by the representatives of Belarus, Romania, Switzerland, the Russian Federation, the United States, Colombia, Saudi Arabia, Paraguay, Türkiye, Egypt, Brazil and the United Kingdom and the observer for Pakistan, to which the panellists responded.

23. A statement was made by the representative of ITU on both priority themes.

24. At its 4th meeting on 16 April 2024, the Commission held a panel on the work of the United Nations system on artificial intelligence. Presentations were made by the following panellists: Deputy Secretary-General of ITU, Tomas Lamanauskas; Director for Data and Analytics, World Health Organization, Steve MacFeely; Director of the AI Policy Lab at Umeå University and a member of the AI Advisory Body of the United Nations, Virginia Dignum; Director, Thematic Engagement, Special Procedures and Right to Development Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Peggy Hicks; Chief, Digital Policies and Digital Transformation, UNESCO, Cédric Wachholz; and Chief, E-Commerce and Digital Economy, Division on Technology and Logistics, UNCTAD, Torbjörn Fredriksson.

25. An interactive discussion ensued, during which interventions were made by the representatives Saudi Arabia, Brazil, the Russian Federation and Switzerland and the observers for Bangladesh and the State of Palestine, to which the panellists responded.

Action taken by the Commission

Science, technology and innovation for development

26. At its closing meeting, on 19 April, the Commission had before it a draft resolution entitled "Science, technology and innovation for development", submitted by the Chair on the basis of informal consultations facilitated by the Vice-Chair (Gambia) and circulated in an informal paper in English only.

27. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, a statement was made by the representative of the United States

28. The Commission adopted the draft resolution and recommended it to the Council for adoption (see chap. I, sect. A, draft resolution II).

Chapter IV
Presentation of reports on science, technology and innovation policy reviews

29. The Commission considered agenda item 4 at its 6th meeting, on 17 April 2024. The 6th meeting was moderated by the Vice-Chair (Philippines).

30. At the meeting, the Head of the Technology, Innovation and Knowledge Development Branch in the Division on Technology and Logistics of UNCTAD presented an overview of the science, technology and innovation policy review report of Seychelles.

31. Remarks on follow-up actions and the way forward were made by the Minister of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry of Seychelles, Devika Vidot. This was followed by remarks on the assessment of agrivoltaics technology in Seychelles made by Ms. Vidot and by the Director General of the Division for Science and Technology in the Ministry of Investment, Entrepreneurship and Industry of Seychelles, Cynthia Alexander, and remarks on the assessment of biogas technology in Zambia made by the Assistant Director for Science, Technology and Innovation in the Ministry of Science and Technology of Zambia, John Lukonde Chongo.

32. Following the presentations, a general discussion ensued, and interventions were made by the representatives of Austria and South Africa and the observers for Seychelles and Zambia. Interventions were also made by a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency and a representative of FIBREE. The observers for Seychelles and Zambia responded to questions.

33. At the same meeting, a secretariat representative gave a presentation on the e-learning platform on science, technology and innovation policy for development of UNCTAD.

Chapter V
Election of the Chair and other officers for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission

34. The Commission considered agenda item 5 at its closing plenary meeting, on 19 April 2024.

35. The Commission elected by acclamation the following officers for its twenty-eighth session:

Chair:
Muhammadou M.O. **Kah** (Gambia)

Vice-Chairs:
Peter **Major** (Hungary)
Ana Cecilia **Gervasi** Diaz (Peru)
Leah J. **Buendia** (Philippines)
Ana Cristina **Amoroso das Neves** (Portugal)

36. The Commission postponed the appointment of the Rapporteur, from among the Vice-Chairs, until the twenty-eighth session of the Commission.

Chapter VI
Provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission

37. The Commission considered agenda item 6 at its closing plenary meeting, on 19 April 2024. It had before it an informal paper containing the draft provisional agenda and documentation for its twenty-eighth session.

38. The Commission adopted the priority themes for the twenty-eighth session and the draft decision to be submitted to the Council concerning the report on the twenty-seventh session and the provisional agenda and documentation for its twenty-eighth session. The Commission decided to recommend the decision to the Council for adoption (see chap. I, sect. B). At the closing meeting, the Chair announced that the twenty-eighth session of the Commission would be held from 7 to 11 April 2025.

Chapter VII
Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-seventh session

39. At the closing plenary meeting, on 19 April 2024, the Chair of the Commission informed members that the report of the session would be prepared after the conclusion of the twenty-seventh session of the Commission and would include a summary of the session, the draft resolutions and decision for adoption by the Council and procedural matters. The Commission recommended to the Council that it take note of the report of the Commission on its twenty-seventh session through a draft decision adopted at the closing plenary meeting on 19 April 2024 (see chap. I, sect. B).

Chapter VIII
Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

40. The Commission held its twenty-seventh session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 15 to 19 April 2024. The Commission held seven meetings (1st to 7th).

41. On 15 April, the twenty-seventh session of the Commission was opened by the Chair, Ana Cristina Amoroso das Neves (Portugal).

42. During the opening plenary meeting, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union made statements.

43. The Commission heard a video message from the President of the Economic and Social Council, Paula Narváez.

44. At its 1st meeting, on 15 April, the Commission held an interactive discussion entitled “A conversation with great minds”, moderated by the multimedia and award-winning journalist, Didi Akinyelure. The panellists were: Director of the Yau Mathematical Sciences Center at Tsinghua University and a professor emeritus at Harvard University, Yau Shing-Tung; former Director General, European Organization for Nuclear Research, Rolf-Dieter Heuer,; and a full professor at ETH Zürich, Nicola Spaldin.

45. During the interactive debate, the panellists responded to comments and questions from the moderator, as well as from the representative of Hungary and the observers for the Islamic Republic of Iran and the State of Palestine.

46. This was followed by a ministerial round table on the role of science, technology and innovation in relation to the 2024 theme of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development, “Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solution”, which was moderated by the Chair.

47. The following participants took part in the ministerial round table during the 1st meeting: Minister of Knowledge Economy, Start-ups and Micro-enterprises of Algeria, Yacine El-Mahdi Oualid; Minister of High Education, Science, Technology and Innovation of Angola, Maria Do Rosário Bragança Sambo; Minister of Communication, Information Technology and Media of Burundi, Léocadie Ndacayisaba; Minister of Science, Technology Development and Innovation of Serbia, Jelena Begović; Secretary of Science and Technology of India, Abhay Karandikar; and First Vice-Minister, Ministry of Communications of Cuba, Wilfredo González Vidal. The ministerial round table continued during the 2nd meeting, with the following participants: Undersecretary for Research and Development of the Department of Science and Technology of the Philippines, Leah J. Buendia; and Deputy Permanent Secretary (Technical), Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology of the Gambia, Mucktarr Darboe. A general discussion ensued, in which statements were made by the representatives of China, Türkiye and Uzbekistan and the observer for the Islamic Republic of Iran.

B. Attendance

48. The list of participants for the session is contained in document E/CN.16/2024/INF/1.

C. Election of officers

49. Nominations for the office of Vice-Chair of the twenty-seventh session of the Commission from the Asia-Pacific States and to replace the Vice-Chair from the Latin American and Caribbean States were considered under the silence procedure.

50. The Commission elected, under silence procedures that ended on 22 February and 5 April 2024, respectively, the following officers for its twenty-seventh session:

Vice-Chairs:
Ana Cecilia **Gervasi** Diaz (Peru)
Leah J. **Buendia** (Philippines)

D. Agenda and organization of work

51. At its 1st meeting, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda, as contained in document E/CN.16/2024/1. The agenda read as follows:

1. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
2. Progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels.
3. Science and technology for development: priority themes:
   (a) Data for development;
   (b) Global cooperation in science, technology and innovation for development.
4. Presentation of reports on science, technology and innovation policy reviews.
5. Election of the Chair and other officers for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission.
6. Provisional agenda and documentation for the twenty-eighth session of the Commission.
7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its twenty-seventh session.

52. At the same meeting, the Commission approved the proposed organization of work, as contained in an informal paper circulated in English only.

E. Documentation

53. The list of documents before the Commission at its twenty-seventh session is contained in the annex to the present report.

Annex

List of documents before the Commission at its twenty-seventh session

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/CN.16/2024/1	1	Provisional annotated agenda and organization of work
A/79/62-E/2024/3	2	Report of the Secretary-General on the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at the regional and international levels
E/CN.16/2024/2	3 (a)	Report of the Secretary-General on data for development
E/CN.16/2024/3	3 (b)	Report of the Secretary-General on global cooperation in science, technology and innovation for development
E/CN.16/2024/CRP.1[a]	2 and 3	Report on the intersessional panel meeting (6 and 7 November 2023)
E/CN.16/2024/INF/1		List of participants

[a] Available at https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ecn162024crp1_en.pdf.

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