

**Introductory Statement by
Mr. Peter Major
Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development**

Commission on Science and Technology for Development
Budapest, Hungary, 11-13 January, 2016

Excellences,

Distinguished delegates,

Dear colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to Budapest, and to open the 2015-16 inter-sessional panel meeting of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD). I am delighted to acknowledge Ministers and other high-level participants from various parts of the world.

Let me begin by highlighting the importance of this panel meeting as this is the first meeting of the commission after several major UN events that took place in 2015 and that are highly relevant for the future work of the entire UN system. I am talking about the third financing for Development conference in Addis Ababa; the high level summit to adopt the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the COP 21 meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris—which resulted in a landmark agreement in our efforts to address climate change—and the WSIS+10 High-Level event of the General Assembly. As part of this panel we will devote a segment to discuss the implications of the outcomes of these events on the future work of this Commission.

At the eighteenth session, the CSTD recommended to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) the adoption of two draft resolutions: one on “Science, technology, and innovation for development,” and one on “Assessment of the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society” (WSIS). I am pleased to report that ECOSOC has adopted both of these resolutions (E/RES/2015/26 and E/RES/2015/27) in the July session. They are important for our deliberations as we prepare for the upcoming CSTD-19.

Let me also bring to your attention that on recommendation of the eighteenth session of the Commission, ECOSOC adopted several decisions (2015/243, 2015/244, 2015/245 and 2015/2456), which extended arrangements for the participation of non-governmental organizations, civil society entities, academic and technical entities and business sector entities, including the private sector, in the work of the CSTD until 2020. Based on recommendation from CSTD, the ECOSOC decision 2015/242 extended the mandate of the Commission’s Gender Advisory Board (GAB) for a further five years, beginning on 1 January 2016.

Over the next three days, the panel will address some pressing science, technology, and innovation-related issues. We will consider two priority themes: "*Smart Cities and Infrastructure*", and "*Foresight for Digital Development*" as well as progress made in the implementation of WSIS outcomes. We recognize the pertinence of examining these themes in the challenges posed by rapid urbanisation and in the way ICTs are changing our societies. To facilitate our discussions, the secretariat has prepared draft issues papers on our two priority themes. Our work here is critical to prepare Ministers for CSTD-19, which will take place in May 2016.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me provide you with an update on a number of key events in which the CSTD has taken part since we last met in May.

In June, CSTD vice-chair, Mr. A Min Tjoa, attended on my behalf the 2015 Retreat of the ECOSOC Bureau with the Chairs of the Functional Commissions and other Expert Bodies. The retreat was on the theme "The post-2015 Development Agenda and the Role of the ECOSOC System". The retreat facilitated a reflection on harmonising the work of the ECOSOC system.

As some of you may recall, during CSTD-18 we held a ministerial roundtable to discuss the role of STI on managing the transition from the MDGs to the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The objective of the roundtable was to collect inputs for the 2015 High-level Segment of ECOSOC. I am delighted to inform you that we transmitted the summary of our roundtable ECOSOC. Also that month, I attended the ECOSOC Coordination and Management meeting in New York, along with Dr. Omobola Johnson, who introduced the report on CSTD-18 as the Chair of that session.

In November, I had the opportunity to represent the Commission at the World Science Forum held in Budapest and then at the Internet Governance Forum held in Brazil. Finally, in December I represented the Commission in two events. I attended a retreat organized by the President of ECOSOC, along with the chairs of other functional commissions. The retreat provided an important opportunity to exchange views on how the functional commissions could contribute individually and collectively to the 2030 Development Agenda. Also, I had the honour to attend the high level meeting

of the GA on WSIS+10 Review which took place during 15- 16 December 2015 in New York.

The WSIS+10 High level event concluded with the adoption of the outcome document (resolution A/70/L.33) that reaffirms the WSIS vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society. Also, the outcome document makes recommendations for the future concerning ICT for development, bridging digital divides, and Internet governance, among other issues. The GA calls for the continuation of the annual reporting of the Secretary-General on WSIS through our Commission. Further, it calls for a strong link between the CSTD reporting and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, it extends the Internet Governance Forum's mandate for ten years, and requests the CSTD to take into account the progress made in the implementation of the recommendation of its former Working Group on the Improvements to the IGF in the annual reporting of the Secretary-General on WSIS.

Additionally, the GA requested the CSTD Chair to establish a working group on enhanced cooperation no later than July 2016. The group would report to the Commission's 21st session (2018). The General Assembly also agreed to hold a further High Level Meeting on the Information Society in 2025, linking it to the review for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen, this panel provides us with an excellent opportunity to deliberate on these important outcomes and the contribution of the CSTD. I invite all of you to actively engage in discussions and produce concrete proposals for consideration by the Commission in May.