

**UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
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**The role of science, technology and innovation in accelerating the recovery  
from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the  
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels**

Statement by

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**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. MATHU JOYINI, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
AT THE  
26<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR  
DEVELOPMENT  
UNITED NATIONS, GENEVA, 27 MARCH 2023**

Honorable Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
distinguished guests

I am pleased to address you today as one of the co-facilitators for the STI Forum, which will be taking place early in May, from the 2nd to the 5th.

Together with my colleague, Ambassador Woodroffe of the UK, we have been working closely with the Secretariat and the 10-Member Expert Group to ensure we have a meaningful and successful Forum.

In January, we had an opportunity to engage and exchange ideas with the Technology Facilitation Mechanism members on this year's Forum and what we collectively want to achieve.

2023 is a special year. A year when a number of key processes are being undertaken at the United Nations. Processes that are meant to deepen and preserve the multilateral nature of the UN.

These processes are meant to help us with the following: (i) Collectively acknowledge that the world is changing rapidly and the UN has a role to ensure we make meaning of these changes, and that we respond appropriately as the global community; (ii) Acknowledge the many complex and interlocking challenges we are facing today, and were referred to this morning and that no one country is in a position to resolve or handle these challenges singlehandedly; and (iii) Recognize the need to come together to develop common solutions and approaches to address the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities.

The one process we are all anticipating and want to give due consideration is the SDG Summit in September this year, where we will review progress on all the SDGs.

This of course is to be followed by the Summit of the Future in 2024, where we will be taking forward the SDGs and working together on the future we want. Other processes we are undertaking this year are in preparation for the Summit of the Future, including the Global Digital Compact that has been referred to this morning by the 2 SGs.

So as we meet in this important session of the Commission, we should be having in mind the SDG Summit and the Summit of the Future where we want to ensure the developing countries and their agenda are well considered.

Coming to the CSTD and STI Forum, we know that they are both critical in the achievement of the SDGs. They both provide guidance and catalyze effective partnerships that help leverage the power of Science, Technology and Innovation to drive social and economic progress worldwide.

At all times, we need to ensure complementarity between the CSTD and STI Forum, and all stakeholders engaged in both need to work in this direction. This is part of why I am here today.

The CSTD focuses on STI policies and strategies that enable STI-led socio-economic development. It is an intergovernmental forum of UN Member State to engage in discussions, share best practices, and identify emerging issues related to the STI.

The CSTD also coordinates the work of the United Nations on the follow-up of the World Summit of the Information Society, and the common vision and commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society where everyone can create, access, use and share information.

On the other hand, the STI Forum serves as a platform for diverse stakeholders, including but not restricted to government representatives, to discuss STI practice and applications in the context of the SDGs. It brings together government officials, researchers, and innovators to share ideas, knowledge, and best practices on how to leverage STI for sustainable development.

While the CSTD focuses on STI policy and practice development and learning, the STI Forum focuses on identifying technologies addressing the SDGs and promoting collaboration among all stakeholders. A key component of the activities of both is capacity building for STI for SDGs. The importance of closing the STI capacity gaps between developed and developing countries cannot be emphasized enough.

The STI Forum will have 3 distinct segments, the main programme on the 3rd and 4th, the Africa STI Day on 2nd and the Global Solutions Summit on the 5th. The programme is available on the website.

In putting the programme together, we were guided by the following principles: Aliveness to the moment and the opportunities it provides; Inclusivity, in particular young people and women; Practical and solution-oriented engagements; Strong

focus on local action and examples; Creating space for learning and sharing; and Reinforcing interlinkages and integration, especially in processes at the UN

A few words on the Africa STI Day:

It will be the inaugural session, held on the margins of the STI Forum, on the 2nd of May.

The STI in Africa Day has two main purposes: (a) To serve as a vehicle for connecting the global community to cooperate, network, showcase, share experiences, build strategic alliances, and, wherever possible, set in motion concrete actions that advance Africa's STI4SDGs priorities; and (b) to bring the outcomes of the African Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Forum to the global STI Forum and vice versa, with a view to guiding facilitative actions on both ends.

The theme of the STI in Africa Day is aligned with that of the African Regional STI Forum 2023 which is "accelerating development and diffusion of emerging technologies for a green, inclusive and resilient Africa" and which was held in Niamey, Niger, from 26-27 February 2023.

The African Regional STI Forum has grown into the pre-eminent continental platform for the exploration of priority issues of science and technology, showcasing emerging developments relevant to African STI4SDGs, building and enhancing technical and entrepreneurial culture among young people, and forging long-lasting partnerships and alliances that are sustainable and potentially self-sustaining in the long run. Since 2019, the continental STI showcase has attracted over 3,000 delegates representing African countries, United Nations agencies, the academia, industry, civil society, youths, and marginalized groups, among others.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, to conclude, both the CSTD and the STI Forum could help by showcasing positive experiences in STI policy and practice, as well as through energizing mutual and collaborative policy learning processes. Such processes are desperately needed in the post pandemic era as we face serious threats to multilateralism and generalized weakness in developing global solutions to the multiplicity of challenges, I referred to earlier.

As co-chair of the STI Forum, I look forward to the input that the deliberations of the CSTD this week can make to the Forum's work in May.

I thank you.