

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**  
**Coordination Segment**

Session on: Reflections on the work of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies

Talking point of Mr. Mansour Al-Qurashi  
Acting Chair of the CSTD

New York, 1-2 February 2023  
(3 minutes)

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*Question from the chair:*

*Could you share how CSTD is advancing STI solutions, including to tap on the potential of the interlinkages between the SDGs, to accelerate the implementation of the Goals?*

Thank you Chair for the question,

It is a great pleasure for me to speak as Acting Chair of the Commission on Science, Technology and Development (CSTD).

As the focal point in the UN system on STI for development, the CSTD has considered the policy issues raised by rapid technological changes, which are strongly driven by the evolution of digital technologies and their impact on development.

Moreover, the CSTD, in implementing the mandate given to it by the General Assembly in 2006 to undertake the system-wide follow up to the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, has built considerable experience and a knowledge base that can represent a significant input to the discussions about the Global Digital Compact (GDC) and to its implementation and follow up. Specifically, the CSTD could contribute in two ways:

- Provide inputs or brief participants in the GDC negotiations on digital and development issues where CSTD has worked on; and
- After the GDC enters into effect, provide a forum serve for member States and other stakeholders to monitor progress in its implementation similar to the role it has played for the WSIS follow up.

The CSTD has built coordination links with other forums and actors including other ECOSOC commissions, the STI Forum or the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology. In the digital realm, of course, the CSTD has a mandate from the GA to review the progress made in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and in this work we have strong cooperation links with a vast array of stakeholders.

Each year, the CSTD is mandated to facilitate the negotiation of two resolutions, one on the implementation and follow up of progress on the World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS) and the other on Science, Technology and Innovation Policy. Not only are these important pieces of policy created as guidelines, but they are also translated into practical policy initiatives.

One such policy initiative is the STI policy review program, which for many years has assisted over 20 developing countries by providing substantive policy advice. The CSTD Secretariat at UNCTAD also works on a Technology Assessment Programme to complement this work through the provision of tools for technological foresight.

The CSTD is keenly aware that work needs to be done to bring developing countries fully into the discussion on frontier technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning and biotechnologies. The development of frontier technologies has been limited to a small number of developed states, but their implications will touch all countries in some way. Particular needs around technology proliferation must be discussed not only in terms of policy but also in terms of necessary ethical considerations and potential ethical issues.

I thank you for your attention and looking forward to welcome you at the CSTD annual session from 27 until 31 of March 2023, in Geneva.

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