

General Assembly
Structured Dialogue III: “*Identifying the potential for development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies and identifying options for the way forward*”
Statement by Jill Derderian, Counselor for Economic and Social Affairs
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Thank you. We would like to acknowledge and express appreciation for the PGA and his team’s work to organize these structured dialogues, the work of the co-moderators to moderate the discussion, and the contributions of all the panelists.

The United States believes that the effective incorporation of new technologies is critical for sustainable growth and development. The U.S. has strongly expressed the need for the diffusion of technologies across the globe to accomplish a myriad of social and economic goals.

Technology diffusion and science and engineering are already helping to make tremendous progress in support of sustainable development. At the same time, the development of future, problem-solving technologies needs to continue to be encouraged and incentivized in all countries.

Innovation, diffusion, and transfer of technology are critical to realizing true transformation. Whether in information, transportation, communications or lifesaving medicines, new technologies can help countries leap to new levels of sustainable development. New global partnerships can help us develop the tools and regulations we need to support growth and innovation, and ensure that these advances are more broadly shared.

Our task in these dialogues is to consider how the UN can foster collaboration and information sharing to accelerate the changes we need for the future we want.

Given the vast – and constantly expanding and evolving – array of tools, programs and activities already underway in the UN system and carried out by other international organizations, including, for example, those that involve training and technical assistance, as well as technology needs assessments, we believe the questions that have been posed for these sessions are good ones, and that we need answers to them, including country examples and data, to inform our approach to options and possible next steps to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies.

Mr. Chair, we think it is important to briefly reiterate a few points we have made already:

We strongly believe that enabling environments are critical for the diffusion and absorption of technology and that non-government actors are the primary drivers of technological advance. Technology transfer should be voluntary and carried out on mutually agreed terms and conditions. Finally, in order to achieve our development objectives, we need to recognize that in all contexts, technology innovation and application is advanced through the strong protection of intellectual property.

During the first two structured dialogues, we learned about the tremendous variety of global technology transfer mechanisms – from WIPO Green to the Climate Technology Centre and Network. Many of these mechanisms appear to provide solutions to the challenges many have raised regarding technology diffusion and absorption in areas ranging from research collaboration, to scientific information, to capacity building for innovation and application of technology.

What also became apparent is that even the experts are unaware of the full spectrum of existing mechanisms and what they have to offer, and often governments, educational institutions, private companies and individuals may have a difficult time knowing how to access and use them.

In this context, the discussion from the first two dialogues reaffirmed to us that it is not evident that another new mechanism for technology facilitation would be helpful or useful. What is clear is that better coherence, awareness and information sharing would be beneficial to help minimize duplication, maximize synergy, coordination, and effectiveness, enhance capacity and help those Member States that desire to learn from and adapt to successful strategies. We acknowledge and appreciate the explanation that UN-DESA has provided on the importance of these key functions for further discussion on how best to incentivize and facilitate technology sharing and innovation.

A large number of specific functions have been proposed in relation to technology facilitation and the previous dialogues and our discussions today are all beneficial, and have underscored for us that effective coordination, public awareness, capacity building and incentives are important at all levels.

At a national level, science, technology, engineering and innovation should be integrated and coordinated in national policy development and implementation, in

order to support other public policy goals, such as economic development, public infrastructure, education, sustainable agriculture and public health. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has been assisting LDC governments since 2012 to develop Intellectual Property and Innovation Policies and Strategies to engender an enabling national policy environment. For example, Ethiopia has completed the multi-stakeholder review of the draft strategy, and it is now up for consideration by the relevant national authority.

Education in particular needs to be a top priority. Students need training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics - the so-called STEM fields - so they can pursue research, develop ideas, patent discoveries, start companies or teach skills to others. We can use mobile platforms, online curricula, open source journals, and digital libraries to provide scalable, more tailored, interactive and data-rich approaches to education everywhere to everyone.

Governments need to do much more to create the conditions in which science, technology and innovation are valued; critical thinking and diversity of ideas are promoted; and clear rules of the game are fair, transparent and enforced. It is particularly crucial to establish a predictable intellectual property regime, with legal frameworks to support the generation and commercialization of ideas. We need to remove barriers to innovation, including discriminatory trade practices and corruption.

Access to information and connectivity are essential and more than just buzzwords. It is the key to effective coordination, awareness, and possibilities. This means giving people concrete access to infrastructure, finance, social services, and yes, political decision-making.

At an international level, coordination and public awareness requires better information sharing and a decentralized structure that allows more customization for each country and for the needs of each stakeholder. Finding ways to better coordinate and share best practices and pursuit of synergy between the large number of existing mechanisms can be an important objective of our discussions.

We welcome the insights and presentations of the panelists, which give us additional food for thought as we move forward. And we welcome and are ready to continue engaging in further dialogue in this direction. Thank you.