

**Statement of the United States of America**  
**Post-2015 Session on Science, Technology and Innovation Issues**  
**[As prepared]**

**Delivered by U.S. Coordinator for the Post-2015 Development Agenda,**  
**Mr. Tony Pipa**

**April 22, 2015**

Thank you Mr. Co-Facilitator for the opportunity to speak to the critical issue of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI), and its role in accelerating sustainable development. It is important for us to explore this issue fully within the Post-2015 and FFD processes if we are going to be successful in achieving the sustainable development goals, and we look forward to further developing and discussing the concrete opportunities they afford.

Few issues set apart the Post-2015 era from that of the MDGs and the Monterrey Consensus before it, as does STI - global connectivity, accelerated scientific progress, and widespread access to technology, data, and synthesized information. Advances in STI bring the promise of accelerated progress on every single OWG goal area.

Just within Goal 6 (Water and Sanitation), for example: projects like the Desal Prize – part of a “Securing Water for Food Grand Challenge”- engage innovators to address and help alleviate severe water stress conditions in developing countries through sustainable, small-scale water desalination systems that can provide potable water for humans, as well as water appropriate for crops in developing countries.

And this morning Ambassador Sager mentioned ebola – we launched a similar challenge to stimulate innovations to address ebola, resulting in the rapid and effective redesign of health care worker suits to make them cooler and quicker to put on and take off.

The United States attaches the highest priority to harnessing the capacity of STI to these ends. Last year we launched the US Global Development Lab specifically to scale up our efforts and investments in this area. Based on that experience, we see STI as deeply connected to other MOI, and prefer to have it addressed alongside them rather than separated out for special treatment. We thus do hope and expect that it will be addressed in a coordinated and cohesive manner within the FFD process.

As we explore this topic, we wish to reinforce a few key principles for our treatment of STI within the Post-2015 and FFD processes:

First, our discussion should be guided by the desire to highlight those ideas that have the greatest demonstrated potential for supporting robust technology creation and sharing in appropriate, innovation-incentivizing ways. As we have argued throughout, we benefit greatly by grounding our deliberations in evidence, and ensuring our discussion is fact-based and based on such

analysis will ensure a substantive success as well as help us constructively come together and find agreement.

As others have also stated, we must create an effective enabling environment for STI, including through Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math education, policy and regulatory environments that enable and indeed foster investment, R&D, and capacity building. Creating an environment that invites participation, creativity, and alleviates the suspicions and concerns identified by Ambassador Patriota, will help us achieve our goals. It was also heartening to hear the emphasis on South/South Cooperation, as this provides an important opportunity for knowledge-sharing and technical assistance that can be transformative. Creating a confiscatory environment will further polarize much-needed partners and will contribute to our failure.

Equally critical is adequate investment in physical infrastructure, including infrastructure to leverage the current and future digital economy. Examples of such efforts include the African Broadband Partnership, the Alliance for an Affordable Internet, and the Global Broadband Initiative.

Likewise, a robust exchange between cross-functional experts is essential to involve all the relevant players in the technology exchange process and to enable people to utilize technology in the ways in which they want to use it. And so it is our view that only by broadening the context of our discussion here at the UN can we hope to succeed in realizing the potential of technology to drive innovation and sustainable development.

Finally, our decisions on technology should be driven by our awareness of and experience with what currently exists, including best practices and lessons learned, and by an effort to identify specific needs and achievable benchmarks, and should reflect the most effective ways to progress toward achieving our shared goal of fostering scientific and engineering capacity and technology diffusion in support of sustainable development.

To the specific focus on the Technology Facilitation Mechanism: as we heard this morning, Member States have engaged in an active discussion on technology facilitation over the past several years here and in a variety of other forums. These workshops and dialogues reconfirmed the importance of technology to solutions for sustainable development and generated ideas about possible next steps. As the PGA report noted, there remains no consensus among Member States for a facilitation mechanism, and indeed, the PGA report was not a consensus document.

So we still have work to do as we determine further options. We agree with many here who have today pointed out that there is great diversity among developing countries in terms of their interests, needs, capacity, and even basic legal structures. And to add to the complexity, just as the needs of developing countries are not homogenous, neither is “technology.”

Some of the technology that could meet the calls that we hear in this forum and elsewhere is government-owned or the programs developing the technology are government-run.

We are committed to continuing to explore how to enhance those government-owned and managed programs and support the goals we are defining through the FfD and post 2015

processes, building on considerable experience and precedent from work of this kind undertaken previously.

And as we have heard this morning, engagement with the private sector will also be important, as well as with universities and schools, research institutes, civil society (who create innovations to ensure technology can be used by and applied towards sustainable development), and even private citizens with ideas. We've heard general recognition that the approaches needed to attract these partners differ from the approaches that motivate us as governments. We must identify and create incentives that support voluntary private sector technology transfer on mutually agreed terms and conditions – so that we can build upon successful existing partnerships and develop the new partnership that our distinguished co-facilitator called for and that we are all striving for in this dialogue.

Going back to the original mandate for this work, Rio+20 called for such work to “take into account existing models.” From our perspective, the constructive dialogue regarding the technology bank and science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to the Least Developed Countries has been helped by specific and concrete objectives, built on the basis of existing programs and activities. We look forward to further dialogue after the completion of the Panel of Expert's report in July.

We have many additional examples of existing technology facilitation mechanisms in the UN system, including the Clean Technology Center and Network, WIPO Green, Building Opportunities Out of Science and Technology (BOOST), Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST), and the Global Innovation Fund, just to name a few. We find it important to take into account lessons learned from these existing mechanisms, exploring whether they are working effectively – and if not, why not – and where they are, how we can look to emulate or scale up successful models. Such steps can help us ensure our efforts here have a significant impact, rather than repeat previous mistakes or waste resources on redundancy.

We look forward to further collaboration to assess and find ways to build upon what we know works and where we might pursue additional effort.

Thank you.