

4th Session of Intergovernmental Negotiations on Post-2015 Development Agenda

Joint Session between FfD and Post-2015 processes

April 22, 2015

Statement delivered by Amb. Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative of India to the UN on Technology facilitation mechanism, and other science, technology and innovation issues

Mr. Co-Facilitators,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

Thank you for convening this interactive debate on the possible arrangements for a technology facilitation mechanism in the context of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

India has been a strong supporter of the transformative potential and role of technology as the *golden key* to unlock shared prosperity and planetary sustainability. We support the proposal for the creation of a Facilitation Mechanism under the auspices of the United Nations for the promotion of development, transfer and dissemination of technology.

Co-Facilitators,

The Indian delegation has long maintained that without a collaborative approach on international cooperation on technology development, transfer and diffusion, the global achievement of sustainable development will remain a mirage.

The global nature of the challenges that we confront makes it imperative that a public goods approach to global resources is matched by an equally constructive approach to technology cooperation.

As we transition from the normative discourse of ideas on sustainable development into path-breaking actionable commitments through the SDGs, it is all the more important that the discussions on technology also move from long-winding debates and empty pronouncements on the importance of STI into meaningful and action-oriented outcomes on international cooperation on technology.

Co-Facilitators,

While the note circulated by the Secretariat is a useful aide memoire to this issue, it is useful to recall that the proposal to create a Technology Facilitation Mechanism in the UN is not merely a call of developing countries.

The Rio+20 mandate on this issue was based on the emphasis our leaders put on the importance of ‘cooperative action on technology innovation, research and development’.

The report of the Secretary General of September 2012 that followed this mandate was prepared after consultations with no less than 22 UN organizations including UNDP, ITU, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNEP and WIPO. This detailed report contained a well researched and detailed exposé of the global trends and institutional landscape on technology cooperation and proposals for the functions, format and working methods of a TFM in the UN.

It deserves our attention that the 2nd report on this issue by the Secretary General in August 2013, prepared after consultations from an even wider range of UN agencies, while proposing additional options for strengthened technology cooperation, *reaffirmed* the earlier recommendation of creating a United Nations global technology facilitation mechanism.

Building on the 4 workshops held in 2013, where a rich array of views and suggestions were presented, the report emphasized that a comprehensive approach is needed for technology facilitation, as the challenge is broader than that of cross-border technology transfer and goes well beyond a narrowly defined technology agenda.

Co-Facilitators,

The series of four structured dialogues held last year built further on these discussions and also tapped into the expertise from academia and private sector.

A detailed technical paper by Prof. Ambuj Sagar of India and Mr. Arun Majumdar of Google and Stanford University presented a very interesting proposal of an Advanced Research Project Agency for Sustainable Development (ARPA-SD), building on existing initiatives both internationally and those pursued by some leading developed countries.

It is apparent therefore that ample discussions on this issue have already taken place and all facets have been adequately explored. The discussion has not been limited to member states alone, and indeed several noted experts have also shared their valuable perspectives on this issue.

My own delegation has participated constructively in these debates and has made several specific and concrete proposals.

Co-Facilitators,

The summary presented by the Co-Moderators of the Structured Dialogues presents a useful starting point for our own deliberations in this process.

However, in order to avoid discussions from meandering into generalities, we need to focus our energies on addressing several key issues to build a common understanding.

There are several issues that we could usefully focus our attention on. I would propose the following 4 questions:

- What will the TFM do? What would be its core functions?
- What kind of arrangements would the TFM have, including for oversight and administration?
- How will the work of the TFM be organized, at the international and national levels?
- How do we tap into the expertise and resources of different stakeholders including the private sector?

We are ready to provide our own considered views on several of such questions.

Co-Facilitators,

Technology cooperation is not a zero sum game, nor should this issue become a taboo subject for discussions in the UN, as it unfortunately seems to have become, in the name of exaggerated fears about Intellectual Property Rights or mandatory technology transfer requirements.

We believe that if we engage constructively and in a spirit of cooperation that has characterized our engagement on the SDGs and this process so far, it should not be impossible to arrive at an understanding that meets our expectations and fully takes care of our individual interests.

Non-engagement however, should not be an option for those who are serious about the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

We strongly urge all member states to engage constructively in these discussions as we ourselves will do.

We also request you to allocate more time to this issue in the coming weeks and to focus our discussions going forward on concrete questions and issues so as to frame our deliberations better.

We have full confidence in your leadership **Co-facilitators** and we are confident that you will lead us to a productive, meaningful and ambitious outcome on this issue as part of the outcome document to be adopted in September.

I thank you.
