

General Assembly Consultative Workshops
Workshop 2
Technology needs of developing countries and options to address them
1 May 2013

CLOSING REMARKS

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We have completed two productive Workshops on technology needs of developing countries and options to address them, in the context of our discussions on the follow up to the Rio+20 Conference.

The Workshops have certainly been successful in at least in one respect, namely in terms of generating an interactive discussion among invited experts, Member States and representatives of other stakeholder communities present. This was one of the key objectives behind our decision to call for these Workshops.

It is also clear that we have not answered all questions, and in some facets of this problem, we may have generated more questions than answers. But this is inevitable and to be welcomed. We are, after all dealing with science and technology here.

We have carefully noted reminders made by Member State representatives. Our ultimate objective is to discuss, with a view to agreeing in the General Assembly, options for mechanisms that can facilitate and accelerate the generation and diffusion of clean and environmentally sound technologies in developing countries. This should cover both an understanding of updating existing mechanisms as well as realistic and feasible options for creating new and additional ones.

But to get there, we needed to take an up-to-date picture of the problem that we are trying address. The picture that we have been shown is a rich and complex one. We heard a number of themes and messages recur throughout the two days:

- "The technology is there."
- There is a need for "systemic solutions" to the problem of promoting the deployment of clean and environmentally sound technologies.
- Technology needs, issues and gaps are very much differentiated by country groups, be they income groups or regions.
- So are the potential solutions and capabilities.

I might add, even if few may have underlined this here, that the capabilities of countries and options vary significantly even within income groups.

But I will not attempt to provide a full summary at this point, as summaries of several sessions have already been given. And, we will provide a comprehensive summary of the two Workshops as well as the presentations given by the experts and statements delivered by participants, all on the PGA website.

The Secretariat will also be sending out a short set of questions to solicit views of Member States and other stakeholders that can then be taken into account as the Secretary-General prepares his report to the next General Assembly.

This is just the end of the beginning. The first two Workshops have given us ample food for thought to take into account for the next phase. We can now look forward to the upcoming Workshops 3 and 4 to be held on 30 and 31 May also here in the Headquarters.

In Workshop 3 we will seek to identify what are the most promising opportunities offered by existing international institutions and programs to facilitate research and development cooperation, as well as more rapid and widespread global transfer and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies.

On this, there is no doubt that we need to focus on what more needs to be done at the international level. But at the same time, we are not starting from zero. We need to take a careful look at how information, capacity or other gaps can be addressed and how existing international arrangements can be further enhanced to foster technology cooperation and transfer.

And, lest anyone think we are trying to avoid the issue of intellectual property protection, we intend to allocate a good bit of Workshop 3 to a thorough discussion of it. Let me also note, however, the remarks made by several experts yesterday, underlying that the importance of IPRs as a barrier to technology uptake and use is very much differentiated by sector or type of technology.

Ladies and gentlemen,

With all this behind us by then, the final Workshop should provide an excellent framework to discuss ways for moving forward in this subject area.

And I do not need to remind anyone here that we are dealing with a very complex and difficult issue area. Progress has been too slow since Rio 1992 in addressing the need to develop, transfer and diffusing globally technologies for sustainable development. We must redouble our efforts and also recognize the new technology landscape that has emerged since 1992 and that it presents new cooperation opportunities. Complexity is not an excuse for inaction. Time is of the essence.

But I have reason to believe that we have made good progress and a good beginning the last two days.

I would like to thank our invited experts and moderators for having stimulated a very good discussion. And I thank the representatives of Member States and other stakeholder communities present, for having seized upon this chance for a good interactive discussion.

Watch this space. We will continue down this road. We now take a pause until we resume this discussion on the 30th of May.

Thank you.