

**First Briefing to Member States on the 6th Multi-stakeholder Forum
on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum)
under the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM)**

25 February 2021

Amb. A. Pildegovičs, Permanent Representative of Latvia

Thank you Mister President!

On behalf of Ambassador Koba of Indonesia and myself, I would like to first thank His Excellency Mr Munir Akram of Pakistan for entrusting us with this important and exciting task to co-chair the 6th Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs.

I wish to assure colleagues – the UN membership and other stakeholders - that we are committed to ensuring a successful STI Forum 2021. A Forum that lives up to the multi-stakeholder spirit, engages participants on timely topics in the realm of STI for SDGs, and provides relevant input to the High Level Political Forum.

We would also like to thank colleagues in UN DESA, UNCTAD's New York office for their support, as well as to the entire UN Inter-agency Task Team and the 10-Member Group for their continued work in preparing the Forum this year.

Today we are glad to share progress made in preparations of the 6th STI Forum, and to inform on the way forward and listen to your comments and answer your questions.

As Mister President has said, this year the STI Forum will take place from 4 to 5 May 2021. As we expect the Covid-19 pandemic related restrictions to continue thus limiting international travel and in-person gatherings, we are going forth with the plan that the STI Forum will be virtual.

The format will be different, but it is the multi-stakeholder participation and Forum's content that matters. That will be our focus. Stimulating keynotes and panel discussions, opportunities to hear directly from innovators and exciting side-events and exhibits – the signature STI Forum features will be there.

STI Forum is part of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism created by Addis Ababa Action Agenda and Agenda 2030. The forum serves as a global and multi-stakeholder mechanism for both developed and developing countries, that facilitates pragmatic, in-depth discussions on a wide range of science, technology and innovation issues intended to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

While it will be a challenge to deliver in the limited course of just two days on a range of mandates adopted by Member States, and to meet the expectations, it is also vitally important.

Science, technology and innovation have been our lifelines during the Covid-19 pandemic and continue to be the main sources of hope and solutions. We are committed to making the Forum inclusive, balanced and impactful. We intend to reflect on lessons-learned and look towards the future, deliberate big themes and share practical knowledge and best practice.

STI Forum has led to various STI partnerships, including within and beyond the UN system and coordination with other initiatives is important. We look forward to building on established partnerships and creating new.

Furthermore, STI Forum should be mindful of other multilateral processes and events taking place this year and contribute to the broader discussions, for instance, on climate action or food system transformation. We will also work to ensure the relevant links to General Assembly's High-Level Debate on Digital Cooperation and Connectivity in April and the Commission of Science and Technology for Development later in May.

As already mentioned, the STI Forum is mandated to inform and support the High-level Political Forum discussions. Accordingly, the theme for the STI Forum itself will be closely aligned with that of the HLPF this year. It will focus on STI for the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and pathways towards achieving the SDGs.

As in previous years, the Co-chairs Summary document will consider key highlights of the discussions, messages and recommendations from the STI Forum and will be transmitted to the HLPF.

Substantive preparations for the STI Forum are underway, including through discussions with the UN Inter-Agency Task Team and the Secretary-General's 10-Member Group. Informal expert level consultations are on-going. The traditional preparatory meeting is planned for second half of March, after which we will be finalizing the programme.

The draft Concept note for the STI Forum will be made available in the first half of March and Information note on participation and registration will also be made available soon. All information will be published on the STI Forum website and communicated to Missions in New York.

I would like now to give the floor to my dear colleague Ambassador Koba for his opening remarks that will also highlight some of the themes that will be covered in the STI Forum and opportunities for engagement.

Thank you!