

UAE Minister of State for Advanced Technology Statement for the Ministerial Session of the Science, Technology, and Innovation Forum

It is a pleasure to be here today discussing an important facet that plays into the achievement of the Sustainable development goals: Science, technology and Innovation.

Science and technology has played a significant role in the last year. It was the tool that held up our healthcare systems, as scientists and doctors learnt more about the virus. It was the tool that provided us with a means of prevention, the vaccine. It was the tool that enabled our children to continue to learn. It was the tool that upheld economies as work continued in its various forms.

The world was able to benefit from deeply rooted science and technology ecosystems that existed in a few areas of the world. This enabled humanity in a time of crisis.

As we continue to evolve as individual societies and nations, we can't ignore the power of science. It is after all, what brings us together. Together in exploring, together in finding answers to the most complex of problems. In the Emirates, we continue to evolve our science and technology ecosystem, with a primary focus on climate change, healthcare, food security and water security. This works together with enabling the deployment and development of key technology areas to create further value in the economy.

The past year has taught us the importance of agility, and allowed us to look at our science and technology priority areas with a new eye. We revised our policies, to ensure that they were robust, that it had both local and global impact, that it addressed the key challenges and transformed them into opportunities. We continued our realization that science communities uphold societies, and that diversity is a solution in science, technology, and innovation. By changing our approach, we built a more agile science and technology ecosystem to address our challenges, increase productivity and impact our economy, and more importantly our society.

We have also worked on furthering international efforts and cooperation in research and development. The Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate, that was announced by the UAE in the Leader's summit on climate is one such example of how we can collectively work together, enabling partnerships to solve global challenges.

As much as science and technology has played a vital role in enabling societies, we must not forget that the past year has increased the gap between those that had access to science and technology, and those societies that did not have access. We must continue to alleviate gaps between our societies, ensure access to expertise and experience that allows for technologies to benefit life across the world.

As Marie Curie said: "Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less."

On the back of this forum, we should all continue our commitment to evolve our science communities, and through them we will enable the world.