Intervention in Session 5: Emerging Science and Technology Trends, Challenges and the SDGs
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Elenita Dano, ETC Group

Most of the world is grappling with the impacts of frontier technologies - ranging from violation of basic rights, different forms of discrimination and breach of privacy and labor rights, to political repression and manipulation and disproportionate power and influence of technology platforms. As the capacity of governments and society to deal with, monitor and regulate emerging technologies remains insufficient, the Technology Divide between the North and South, between men and women across the world, and between urban and rural communities within countries continue to widen. The global pandemic has exposed the extent and further exacerbated that Great Divide. Investments in digital technologies and on STI alone cannot address these widening gaps. Structural issues around the Technology Divided are equally crucial and need to be tackled head on.

The Rio Principles must remain as the fundamental metrics for consideration of new and emerging technologies, including digital technologies, as means to attain the SDGs. **Precautionary Principle** emphasizes caution, pausing and review before leaping into new technologies. **Free and Prior Informed Consent** requires that any outdoor experiment of frontier technology applications need to undergo transparent, democratic and thorough consultations with communities. **Access to information, participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters**. Public access to information is a prerequisite to meaningful community participation in decision-making on matters relevant to the environment. **Intergenerational equity.** Deployment of frontier technologies that are largely untested, speculative and potentially dangerous for the planet that will be inherited by the next generations violates justice principles.

To attain the aspiration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to "leave no one behind", broad societal deliberation on frontier technologies and their potential environmental, health, economic and social impacts must be a prerequisite for their development and deployment. Participatory mechanisms for evaluation of new and emerging technologies need to be established at the global, regional and local levels. The evaluation of technologies by society is more urgent than ever because the pace of scientific and technological development is accelerating and the control by transnational oligopolies over technologies and resources is expanding beyond the sovereignty of States and the public interest.

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