7th Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

Israel Statement

May 6, 2022

Israel would like to thank the co-chairs of the Forum, the Permanent Representatives of Tanzania and Ukraine, for their many months of work in guiding the process toward a successful outcome.

Mr. Co-Chairs,

Governments and the world’s people look to technology to achieve goals where the challenge is great, and the cost of failure is even greater. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals are such challenges, and so we must use all the tools at our disposal, including STI, to help achieve these goals.

In this year’s Forum, we would like to call particular attention to the Sustainable Development Goals to be reviewed at this year’s HLPF, on education, gender equality, life below water, life on land, and partnerships.

During the height of the pandemic, when so many schools were closed, technology was an academic lifeline for many students around the globe. For others, however, with no access to technology, it was a lost year, two years, or lifetime opportunity. We must ensure that the infrastructure is in place, that the technology is in the hands of those who need it, and that both teachers and students have the necessary digital skills. Israel looks forward to discussions on a Global Digital Compact, proposed in the Secretary-General’s report on “Our Common Agenda”.

STI continues to play an important role in the quest for gender equality – SDG 5. Ensuring digital connectivity for all women, including entrepreneurs, small-holder farmers and others, boosts economic empowerment, social standing, and can help lead to the full realization of their rights. Opening the world of STEM – science, technology, engineering and mathematics – to girls in school, will boost the ranks of women in tech jobs across sectors – from the digital to health to the environment – to name just a few. These are the jobs that the world looks up to, and ever-greater numbers of women in leading STI roles will continue to break down social barriers.

Regarding SDG 14 – life below water – we believe that the upcoming UN Oceans Conference, to be held in Lisbon, has a timely overarching theme of ocean action for Goal 14, based on science and innovation. We need ongoing basic research on the state of the oceans. We need technology to reduce pollution, to curb illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and to address many other assaults on marine ecosystems. And we need innovators to help connect the science and technology in novel ways.
In a similar way, SDG 15, concerning life on land, calls out for a drastic overhaul of how we live on this planet. Many of our unsustainable activities are ripe for the application of STI. Technology makes the transition to clean energy more feasible, using efficient solar and other renewable energy technologies. Israeli scientists and innovators are at the forefront of many technologies that help reduce the impact of people on the natural environment, from sustainable water use to mainstreaming a number of protein substitutes, which reduces the deforestation for pasture-land, and helps preserve biodiversity. We should use all the available technologies to help us meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, our further commitments made in Glasgow, and to help us bring the planet back toward equilibrium.

The spirit behind SDG 17, on partnerships, was guiding Israel’s development cooperation decades before there was a 2030 Agenda. From agriculture to alternative energy to healthcare – Israel has been working with its partners to spread the needed technical knowledge to achieve sustainable development.

Mr. Co-Chairs,

We must be honest with ourselves: science, technology and innovation cannot, by themselves, get us over the goal line. Even as STI helps pulls us closer, we still need political will. Israel believes that with this will, STI provides a diverse tool kit that can get back on track for sustainable development and the SDGs.

Thank you.