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**Welcoming remarks to the
Side Event to the Multi-stakeholder Hearing for FfD4 on
”Strengthening Science, Technology and Innovation for Achieving the SDGs:
Drawing Lessons from the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism and
Innovative Financing Models”**

UN headquarters, New York, 1:15 - 2:30 pm, 29 October 2024

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished colleagues,

Welcome, and thank you for joining us for this side event, entitled “Strengthening science, technology, and innovation for achieving the SDGs”. This gathering comes at a pivotal moment, as we prepare for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development.

Let us take a step back. Without closing gaps in STI access, we cannot meet our global goals. So, to bring the UN closer to the pulse of scientific and technological progress, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda created the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism, or TFM, which I had the privilege to co-found.

As the name implies, the Mechanism “facilitates” cooperation and partnerships, for knowledge sharing, STI policy, and tech transfer. It follows a unique one-UN, multistakeholder model.

Like science itself, the Mechanism has worked cumulatively. Today, the Mechanism truly “stands on the shoulders of giants”. And participation has continuously increased and widened since 2015.

The result? A veritable avalanche of science & tech discussions and initiatives across the UN system. Indeed, most of today’s speakers have been leaders in this regard. I am deeply thankful for their engagement. They can be truly proud of the difference that they have made.

Ladies and gentlemen,



As we look forward, it is crucial that we assess our current trajectory and reimagine how STI can unlock new pathways to sustainable growth and equity.

First of all, we must acknowledge a stark reality: despite remarkable scientific advances, our planetary and societal health continues to face unprecedented threats. Earth's vital boundaries, essential for sustaining life, have been exceeded, posing grave risks to future generations.

Addressing these challenges requires leveraging the most impactful technologies to make energy, food, and housing systems more sustainable and to achieve decent living standards for all.

It also requires that AI, biotech, and other frontier technologies be equitably accessible to all. The benefits of these innovations too often remain out of reach for low-income countries. Bridging widening divides is critical - in research funding, digital infrastructure, and capacity. Technology need not be another source of inequality.

Another priority is to ensure that financial mechanisms adapt to meet the evolving demands of STI. The 10-Member-Group and IATT friends have proposed innovative funding options for the TFM at the global level and for IATT capacity building at the national level, to meet countries' unique challenges and aspirations.

Last but not least, equitable gender representation and fair access to opportunities in STEM are not just ethical imperatives; they are essential to expanding innovation and meeting talent shortages.

Ladies and gentlemen, let us seize this moment to reimagine a future where science and technology are powerful tools for a more sustainable, just, and inclusive world for all. Together, we can build this future. I believe it is a truly worthwhile endeavor.

Thank you.