

Workshop on "The Way Forward: Strengthening the international architecture for clean and environmentally sound technology development, transfer and dissemination"

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**Remarks by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri,
Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN
as a member of the panel on "Options on Technology Facilitation"**

1. I am glad to participate in today's discussion and share my thoughts on an issue that holds the veritable key to the sustainability conundrum. I am referring of course to the transformative impact of technology. If we are to make progress towards eradicating poverty and ensuring the sustainability of our future development, technology is the golden key. Transformational change in the way we consume resources and energy can only come through technological solutions.
2. In the run up to Post 2015 agenda, we are looking at a transformative agenda. Naturally then our approach should also account for a transformative shift in the way we have been looking at technology issues till now. A "global public goods" or a "global common" approach can at best be rhetoric if we do not address the critical need to allow some degree of fluidity and flexibility in the global movement of innovations, technology and ideas.
3. The UN has been in the lead on sustainable development. This leadership must be matched by it having the capability to assist those in need to pursue sustainable development. Mere policy prescriptions will not do. The Secretary General has proposed a Working Group on Technology Facilitation. Let us all be clear that without a forward movement on technology we cannot do much on sustainability. The SG proposal is a good beginning and we need to build on the opportunity. I am aware of the work that is going on in the UNDP, the World Bank and UNEP on knowledge sharing. This is much appreciated. But we must move beyond. Collaboration on research and development is key to the success of a Technology Mechanism.
4. To my mind, we must aim to establish a Technology Facilitation Mechanism housed in the UN that would look at:
 - Need assessment of countries
 - Match making between needs, resources and solutions
 - Bring together donors and researchers; i.e. match financing with technology development and deployment
 - Identify and keep/ buy certain key technologies in a common pool that must then be made available at affordable prices to all: on clean energy etc
 - Must look at the flexibilities that can be worked in the IPR regime given the need for public good, and the limitations imposed by the present technology regimes. [Patents are being granted on low scientific thresholds. This inhibits competition and technology development and deployment]
 - Must provide a platform for collaborative research and development. For this it will have to establish networks between key institutions globally.

- Prepare and share best practices
- Promote synergies in actions of various international institutions by forming global and regional networks.
- Look at options for concessional technology acquisition and transfer
- Work out innovative approaches for payment to long term royalty for technology bought.

5. Keeping the above functions in mind, we can perhaps look at the CGIAR (Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) platform as model to take technology partnership forward.

6. Let us talk a little about CGIAR model and why it is a viable option? The CGIAR was set up in the 1970s to tackle a problem of global dimensions: that of producing enough food for the world's growing population through collaboration in R&D. This was a model that worked to bring together organizations involved in agricultural research for sustainable development and the donors that fund such work. This pioneering approach of integrating and coordinating the efforts of those who fund research and those who do the research is a model that can be replicated to address the challenges of sustainable development that we face today. Coupled with a dedicated fund for the purpose, such an approach can enable sustainable financing to be available for R&D in cutting edge technologies and to make such technologies available at affordable costs and propel their rapid deployment and diffusion. This would allow us to pool-in the R&D capabilities available at different locations to produce results and solutions that benefit everyone. If this solution can work for agricultural research, it can also work for energy solutions. It is a model worth exploring as part of the technology mechanism under the UN.

7. Talking of CGIAR model, we would have to address its financing. Here we can develop a multi-stakeholder approach and involve Governments, IFIs, Regional Development Banks, the private sector and private foundations to pool in resources.

8. The model of IPR flexibilities in regard to health involving generic drugs which have brought huge benefits to people the world over could also be looked into.

9. Why we must anchor the Mechanism in the UN? The report of the Secretary General has noted the many parallel and sometimes overlapping initiatives on technology cooperation, many of them involving the UN. A global mechanism anchored in the UN would provide the much needed coherence in international efforts, enhance synergies and avoid the fragmented approach we have at present. Much bilateral action is also going on between countries. An example is the excellent cooperation between India and the United States on Clean Energy. A global mechanism under the auspices of the UN could also provide an anchor to such initiatives and bring about much needed coherence in many such bilateral initiatives.

10. Our promise of a renewed global partnership will remain hollow if we are not able to provide solutions to technology access.
