

General Assembly
**Structured Dialogue I “Stock-taking of the international debates on
development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound
technologies”**

**Statement by Jill Derderian, Counselor for Economic and Social Affairs
April 29, 2014 – As Prepared**

Thank you. We appreciate the PGA and his team’s work to organize these structured dialogues, the work of the co-chairs to moderate the discussion, and the contributions of all the panelists.

The United States believes that the effective incorporation of new technologies is critical for sustainable growth and development.

With today’s technologies, we can - and have - made decisive gains against poverty and have the potential to eradicate extreme poverty in a generation. We have the potential to end preventable disease, power homes that now darken when the sun sets, use natural resources more efficiently, combat climate change, and give educational opportunity to anyone with an internet connection.

All of the scientific, technological, and social leaps that have driven these trends and possibilities would have been startling twenty years ago. Now they are a fact of life, and the pace of change is quickening.

Our task today is to consider how the UN can foster collaboration to accelerate the changes we need for the future we want.

In most countries, the private sector, universities, innovators and end-users -- not the government -- are the primary drivers of technological advance. In general, governments do not own the vast majority of technologies and cannot force those who do to share their knowledge. Governments play an important role by establishing a supportive environment for knowledge generation and diffusion, as well as for domestic and foreign investment, innovation, and economic activity, in ways that encourage voluntary technology transfer.

The United States strongly believes that any transfer of technology should be voluntary between parties and on mutually agreed terms and conditions, as has been reinforced in multiple UN resolutions. We do not believe that technology can

be successfully "pulled" in solely by government action; rather we believe that market forces must move technologies organically.

There has been tremendous recent experimentation with new global technology transfer mechanisms. Many of these are new and have not been operational for more than one or two years. We need to learn from these experiences, collect data and information that will help analyze their success, and consider the adjustments that need to be made to optimize voluntary technology transfer and absorption.

We would like to note two efforts that seek to strengthen technology facilitation around the world. One is the World Intellectual Property Organization program -- WIPO Green -- a database that facilitates technology transfer by helping to connect technology and service providers with those who would need such technologies and services. Another is the proposed Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries, which is a promising idea that other speakers have mentioned today as well. We welcome further discussion of how to take this idea forward.

The United States also emphasizes again the role that governments play in effective development and dissemination of technology, which requires attention to several areas -- including at the national/domestic level -- in particular, education, legal and regulatory regimes, and information and data.

Education:

First, education needs to be a top priority. In every country, we need to promote policies and educational environments that make students passionate about science and its relevance to the modern world. Students need training in science, technology, engineering and mathematics - the so-called STEM fields - so they can pursue research, develop ideas, patent discoveries, start companies or teach skills to others.

Policy Regime:

Governments, in turn, need to do much more to create the conditions in which science, technology and innovation are valued; critical thinking and diversity of ideas are promoted; and clear rules of the game are fair, transparent and enforced.

It is particularly crucial to establish a predictable intellectual property regime, with legal frameworks to support the generation and commercialization of ideas. We

need to remove barriers to innovation, including discriminatory trade practices and corruption.

In fact, developing countries that are putting in place these kinds of policy and regulatory frameworks are seeing increases in homegrown technology innovation and entrepreneurship as well as technology transfer from abroad.

Data and information:

Access to information and connectivity are essential and more than just buzzwords. This means giving people concrete access to infrastructure, finance, social services, and yes, political decision-making. Cities can be especially powerful engines of change in this regard.

ICT is of course fundamental to connectivity, and it is vital to expand broadband access more consistently to the developing world--especially to women, who are disproportionately affected by the digital divide and the broader gender gap in STEM fields.

The United States appreciates the opportunity to share its views. We note the reports prepared by the Secretary General and his acknowledgement today that technology cooperation is a long-term endeavor. Given the vast – and constantly expanding and evolving – array of tools, programs and activities already underway in the UN system and carried out by other international organizations, we believe the questions that are posed for these sessions are good ones, and that we need answers to them, including country examples and data, to inform our approach to options and possible next steps to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies. We hope the next three one-day sessions will help us gather that information and data.

Thank you.