

Statement by Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the UN, New York at the High Level Segment of the ECOSOC (July 1-4, 2013) in Geneva

Mr. President,

It gives me great pleasure to address this High Level Segment of the ECOSOC on a topic that goes at the heart of our efforts to build a better future for all. Science, technology, innovation and culture are critical enablers of development whose full potential must be harnessed if we are to realize our collective ambition under the Millennium Development Goals.

In this context, we thank the Secretary General for his report on this issue presented to the Council. The Secretary General has rightly pointed out that overcoming twenty-first century challenges such as poverty, inequality and environmental degradation will require drawing on a range of innovations from science, technology and culture.

Mr. President,

Science, technology and innovation hold the veritable key to the sustainability conundrum facing the world today. They are also key to the eradication of poverty and achievement of other human development goals under the MDGs. We must seek rapid advances in science & technology but more importantly, we must also seek to share the fruits of such advances widely if we are to make progress towards eradicating poverty and ensuring the sustainability of our future development. It is imperative that the IPR regime balance rewards for innovation with the common good of humankind and be development oriented.

Access to technology is central to the efforts of the developing countries to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs, address climate change and achieve sustainable development. It is also central to address the critical challenge of energy poverty which many developing countries face today. The link between energy poverty, income poverty, malnutrition and low health indicators is well documented and this empirical overlap is evident in the global achievement map on MDGs.

Mr. President,

As we seek to accelerate our efforts towards achieving the MDGs before 2015 and set our sights on a transformative global development framework for the post-2015 period, we need a transformative shift in the way we have been looking at technology issues so far.

The international system must enhance global collaboration on science and technology. We have seen how collaboration in technology has produced revolutionary impact within a short span of time. Today, we boast of 5 billion mobile phone users worldwide and over 2 billion internet users and this number is growing exponentially. This success of ICT and mobile technologies has been possible because of collaboration. Mobile technology was developed and applied in the North but soon thereafter spread all over

the South due to advances in mass production techniques and uniquely innovative business practices in many developing countries spurring growth and bringing about transformative change in our societies.

Mr. President,

As we deliberate on the post-2015 development agenda, we must also carefully reflect on the global mechanisms to facilitate rapid development, transfer and diffusion of technologies. The Secretary General in his report on options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies has proposed the creation of a global Technology Facilitation Mechanism under the aegis of the UN. We fully endorse this idea which would catalyze our efforts, enhance synergies and bring about much needed coherence in several ongoing international initiatives on technology issues.

Mr. President,

We concur with the Secretary General's report that a culture-sensitive approach is needed for the success of development initiatives. Coming from India which has been a cradle of human civilization and a melting pot of multiple cultures living in harmony with each other, a culture-sensitive approach is one that embraces differences, celebrates diversity and promotes mutual respect. Only such an inclusive approach to culture can enable us to pursue collective objectives such as MDGs in a spirit of solidarity.

A culture centric approach is also necessary for building a sustainable future for all. If we are to collectively achieve the overarching objective of sustainable development, the world will also have to embrace a culture of frugality. This idea has been a part and parcel of Indian ethos and culture. Unfortunately, the current consumption patterns in the industrialized world are not only unsustainable but also inequitable and we must find new pathways for transition to a culture of frugal living, less wastage and equitable sharing of resources.

In conclusion Mr. President, as we redouble our efforts for eradication of poverty and achievement of MDGs by 2015, we must commit ourselves not only to fully utilizing the potential of science, technology, innovation and culture but also to crafting facilitative processes to foster better collaboration for finding collective solutions to the problems we face. India with its human resource and scientific capacity is more than willing to be a partner in this collaboration.

Thank you.

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