



United Nations Security Council

Directed By: Grace Leon

TSMUN XXVII BACKGROUND GUIDE 2023

Topic I: Discussing strategies to enhance the scientific and technological capabilities of developing nations

Topic II: Exploring the contribution of science, technology and innovation to achieving sustainable development goals.

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Tallahassee Southern Model United Nations. My name is Grace Leon and I am the director of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) and my co-director is DJ Spang. I am currently a student at Tallahassee Community College with plans to attend Florida State University to study Political Science and International Affairs. My co-director DJ is also currently a student at Tallahassee Community College with plans to attend Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University to study Education. We are both on the Tallahassee Community College Model United Nation team. The topics under discussion for this years CSTD are:

- I. Discussing strategies to enhance the scientific and technological capabilities of developing nations.
- II. Exploring the contribution of science, technology and innovation to achieving sustainable development goals.

The United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) is the United Nations' home for discussions on science and technology – what is new, what matters, what is changing, what the impact is – and how this affects development and a sustainable future

for all. Since 2006, the commission has been mandated by ECOSOC to serve as the focal point in the system-wide follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). Its members are composed of national Governments, however civil society contributes to discussions that take place. Strong links exist with other UN bodies (The Commission on Status of Women, Regional Commissions, ITU, UNESCO).

I hope this background guide provides sufficient information to help you prepare for the conference. This background guide is meant to introduce delegates to the topics that will be discussed in committee and provide guidance as delegates begin their research. Delegates are strongly encouraged to research the positions, viewpoints, and opinions of their Member States, as well as relevant international and regional frameworks, previous resolutions, and initiatives on these topics.

Each delegation will submit a position paper for the committee. Delegates must turn in their papers before the start of the first committee session. Papers may be emailed to sg@tsmun.org and can also be submitted through a USB drive or hard copy. For a position guide and an example position paper, please visit <http://www.tsmun.org/position-papers.html>. Papers that are not in the correct format will not be eligible for awards. For conference information, resources for preparation, scholarships, and other usual information, visit <http://www.tsmun.org>. If you have any questions leading up to the conference, feel free to contact me at sc@tsmun.org. I look forward to seeing you all in committee.

Sincerely,

Grace Leon and DJ Spang, Committee on Science and Technology for Development Directors.

Committee Overview

Introduction

The CSTD was created to provide the UN with high-level advice through analysis and policy recommendations to guide the future work of the United Nations, develop common policies and to agree on appropriate action. Today the CSTD matters more than ever, as the opportunities and obstacles at the juncture of science, technology and innovation and the need for sustainable development become more complex, global and far-reaching.

Committee Mandate

The CSTD is a part of the United Nations' six main organizations under the Economic and Social Council and is mandated to provide ECOSOC and the GA with advice on relevant issues through analysis and appropriate policy recommendations. The CSTD has functioned as a forum to examine science and technology questions and their implications for development, to advance the understanding of science and technology policies, particularly in respect of developing

countries, and to formulate recommendations and guidelines on science and technology matters within the United Nations system. The mandate of the CSTD is to fight these alarming trends and ensure that modern technological developments benefit all people and all states. To achieve this, it partners extensively with universities, NGOs, technology companies, and more.

History

The distant origins of the CSTD are at the UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development held in Vienna in 1979, where an Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development was created. In 1992 the General Assembly decided to transform the Committee into a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and set up the CSTD. The Commission met for the first time in April 1993 in New York, USA. Since July 1993, the UNCTAD secretariat has been responsible for the substantive servicing of the Commission. The Commission has subsequently met in Geneva, Switzerland.

Some of the important issues raised include the technology and life interface and governance of the use and development of certain technologies – namely, big data analytics, biotech, genome editing, and artificial intelligence. The CSTD is also an open platform where proposals, ideas, experiences, cases, and intellectual thought can be channeled toward making a policy impact. It facilitates concrete collaborations between member states, NGOs, and actors in the science, technology, and development space.

Governance, Structure and Membership

Established in 1992, the CSTD operates within the framework of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The year it was established, the CSTD evolved from the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development, originating from the UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development in 1979. The Commission comprises 43 Member States elected by (ECOSOC) for a four-year term. The distribution of membership is as follows: 11 African States, 9 Asian-Pacific States, 8 Latin American and Caribbean States, 5 Eastern European States and 10 Western European and other states. The Chairperson and Four Vice-Chairpersons are elected at each session by the commission to lead and manage forthcoming activities during the inter-sessional period

Topic 1:

Discussing strategies to enhance the scientific and technological capabilities of developing nations

Introduction

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), advancements in science and technology are key drivers of economic growth, social progress, and environmental sustainability. The United Nations (UN) commitment to fostering inclusive development is enshrined in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with Goal 9 specifically dedicated to building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. Within the CSTD, seeing and aiding technological advancement and scientific developments help nations who are unable to keep up with the quick pace of the modern world. There are several significant issues that cause the delay of the modernization of these nations. Despite progress, significant disparities persist. Developing nations often face challenges such as limited access to education, insufficient research and development infrastructure, and insufficient resources to invest in cutting-edge technologies. The digital divide remains a stark reality, hindering the ability of these nations to harness the benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution fully.

Current Situation

Many countries in the world are still developing and face troubles in keeping up with the modernized countries. There are several things that slow developing countries such as Peru, Ecuador, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, etc., from advancing with the rest of the world; for example, having limited access to education may lead these countries to struggle with inadequate educational infrastructure, including a lack of quality schools, trained teachers, and resources for science and technology education. This limits the development of a skilled workforce in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields. And having limited development of a skilled workforce in STEM fields leads to insufficient research and development (R&D). Several developing nations have access to limited resources for their research and development regarding anything associated with the technological advancements of their country. Limited resources allow inaccurate data to be collected along with incorrect experiments due to the lack

of machinery available to them. Insufficient funding for R&D allows for the inability to conduct groundbreaking research, create innovative technologies, and compete globally regarding scientific advancements. Developing nations also have a digital divide, which leads to unequal access to digital technology, including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and the Internet. The divide shows a form of inequality in those nations that do not have access to information and resources. Those developing nations may have a lack of reliable internet connectivity, infrastructure, and access to computers. This delays the advancement of the nation since it begins to fall behind in the world of modern technology and also harms the possibility of participating in the digital economy. The skilled professional citizens from these developing nations may migrate to a different country where their skills are considered useful; developing nations then end up with a number of people leaving their country in search of better opportunities, which is called “Brain Drain.” This loss of talent can hinder the development and retention of a local pool of experts in science and technology.

Another challenge that developing nations face is the lack of intellectual property. Developing countries may face difficulties navigating intellectual property rights, including patent systems. This can limit their ability to access and benefit from existing technologies and develop and market their innovations. Infrastructure also plays a significant role in developing nations; the production chain is disrupted when infrastructure is not operating properly. This disruption hinders development, which causes economic deficits and, in turn, brings low living standards. For example, insufficient physical infrastructure, such as energy supply, transportation networks, and research facilities, can hamper developing and deploying advanced technologies in developing countries. However, well-designed infrastructure facilitates economies of scale, reduces trade costs, and is thus central to specialization and the efficient production and consumption of goods and services. It is vital to economic growth and development, which is the key to raising living standards.

Technology transfer barriers are another key component to developing nations. It is understood as the process of sharing and disseminating knowledge, skills, and technologies from one entity to another. It is often crucial for nations' economic development and growth, especially for developing countries. It is also referred to as “any kind of limitations and features that hamper the effective functioning of a technology transfer and research commercialization system, and, as a result, block interactions between the R&D sector and enterprises, therefore impeding the development of innovative entrepreneurship.” However, developing nations may encounter obstacles in transferring and adopting technologies developed elsewhere. Issues such as lack of infrastructure, regulatory hurdles, and limited absorptive capacity can impede the effective transfer of knowledge and technology.

Developing nations may also face limited access to financing, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Acquiring the necessary funds to support their nation and its technological

developments is a struggle for developing nations. Limited access to financial resources, venture capital, and supportive financial ecosystems can hinder innovation and entrepreneurship, which can also limit the possibility of any technological advancements the nation may have due to low funds.

Actions taken by the UN

The United Nations provides aid for several situations that may arise within the participating nations. In this case, the UN has taken action to improve the situations mentioned previously. The UN recognizes education as a fundamental pillar for building scientific and technological capacities, so when it comes to promoting access to education, initiatives such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) advocate for inclusive and quality education to equip individuals with the skills needed for a knowledge-based society. The UN also emphasizes the importance of gender-inclusive approaches in science and technology. Promoting women's participation and representation in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) fields is key to fostering diversity and innovation. Having this in place allows for more people of the developing nation to work together and gather more knowledge rapidly so that it could be used to benefit and present the opportunity to help advance their country technologically and scientifically.

Capacity building and knowledge transfer are essential for developing countries. Capacity building refers to the process of strengthening the skills, knowledge, abilities, and resources of individuals, organizations, or communities to improve their effectiveness and achieve their goals. It involves developing and enhancing human, institutional, and organizational capabilities. This process is crucial for sustainable development, as it contributes to individuals' and organizations' long-term effectiveness and self-reliance. Knowledge transfer refers to the sharing and disseminating of information, expertise, and skills from one individual, organization, or context to another. It is a critical aspect of capacity building and significantly advances innovation, economic development, and problem-solving. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) emphasizes the importance of capacity building and knowledge transfer through policy advice and analysis, training and workshops, research and publications, technology transfer and innovation, and more. UNCTAD facilitates the transfer of technology and expertise from developed to developing nations and fosters a culture of innovation and skill development.

An additional action taken by the UN was the enabling of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The UN's SDGs, particularly Goal 9 ("Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure"), outlines a commitment to building resilient infrastructure and promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization. Achieving these goals involves investing in research and

development, fostering innovation, and ensuring that the benefits of technology reach all segments of society, including those of developing countries. Furthermore, the UN encourages global partnerships to address technological gaps. This is because those partnerships permit global interconnectedness, inclusive development, capacity building, innovation, research collaboration, resource mobilization, and more. The UN's Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries is an example of an initiative that facilitates partnerships for the transfer of technology, knowledge, and innovation to the least developed nations. The UN aims to harness the collective power of nations, organizations, and stakeholders to accelerate technological advancements and ensure that technology's benefits contribute to people's well-being worldwide.

Several UN agencies, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and International Telecommunication Union (ITU) support the idea of open access to scientific information and data. WIPO works towards creating a balance between protecting intellectual property rights and ensuring that information and technology are accessible for development purposes. The ITU focuses on mending the digital divide that exists among developing countries by ensuring that those nations have access to information and communication technologies. This includes expanding broadband infrastructure, improving digital literacy, and promoting affordable access to technology. Additionally, the creation of innovation hubs and technology incubators is a strategy endorsed by the UN to foster entrepreneurship and innovation. These hubs can serve as catalysts for the development of local technology ecosystems. The emphasis that the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) puts on the recognition of the importance of technology transfer for addressing climate change is important since this involves facilitating the deployment of environmentally sound technologies in developing nations to support sustainable development.

Regional and International Framework

Several international and regional frameworks associated with the United Nations address the enhancement of scientific and technological capabilities in developing nations. These frameworks provide a platform for discussions, cooperation, and the development of strategies to promote sustainable development through science and technology. An example is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda, adopted by all United Nations Member States, includes SDG 9, which focuses on building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation. SDG 9 emphasizes the importance of investing in technology and innovation to support the development of industries and infrastructure, especially in developing countries. The Technology Facilitation Mechanism

(TFM), which was established under the 2030 Agenda, aims to support the achievement of the SDGs through the promotion of science, technology, and innovation. The TFM facilitates collaboration between UN entities, the private sector, civil society, and the scientific community to enhance the use of technology for sustainable development.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA) on Financing for Development is crucial to the CSTD since the AAAA is an outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. It emphasizes the role of technology in achieving sustainable development.

The AAAA encourages international cooperation and technology transfer to developing countries, recognizing the importance of creating an enabling environment for innovation. An additional framework is UNESCO's International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). The IPDC supports media development projects and initiatives, including those that leverage communication technologies for development, and it promotes access to information and knowledge, including the use of digital technologies, to empower communities and enhance development outcomes.

In the Eastern Hemisphere, the African Union Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) was created, and it is a framework developed by the African Union to guide the continent's development through science, technology, and innovation. The strategy focuses on building Africa's scientific and technological capabilities, fostering innovation, and addressing developmental challenges through research and technology. In the east of the Pacific Ocean, the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway (AP-IS) formed, which is an initiative supported by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to improve regional connectivity and harness the potential of information and communication technologies (ICTs). AP-IS aims to enhance the digital capabilities of countries in the Asia-Pacific region, fostering economic growth and sustainable development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) serves as a key forum for member states to exchange ideas and forge partnerships that prioritize developing countries' unique needs and challenges, share best practices, and coordinate policies relevant to science and technology. The UN emphasizes the importance of open access to scientific information, knowledge transfer, and capacity building. These principles ensure that developing nations have equitable access to the latest advancements, fostering innovation and empowering local communities. Through initiatives such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which the CSTD contributes to its advancement, particularly SDG 9, the UN emphasizes the importance of inclusive and sustainable industrialization, innovation, and infrastructure development. The CSTD's commitment to inclusivity and collaboration reflects a

shared understanding that the benefits of scientific and technological advancements should be accessible to all nations, irrespective of their level of development. Through this, the CSTD guides these nations toward solutions that promote equity, sustainable growth, and the empowerment of developing nations through science and technology. It's continuous efforts to provide a future in which technological progress can be achieved in every country. Its continued commitment aligns with the vision of a more inclusive and technologically empowered global community and reinforces the UN's broader mission of leaving no one behind in the journey toward a sustainable and equitable future.

Topic 2:
Exploring the Contribution of Science, Technology and Innovation to Achieving Sustainable Development goals.

Intro

Science, technology, and innovation (STI) play a key role in achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs), particularly in targets that concern human well-being, such as health, clean water and sanitation, climate change, clean energy, and responsible production, among others. STI can help societies shift toward more inclusive development patterns, strengthen knowledge-sharing, and professional collaboration. As STI consists of the production, dissemination and use of knowledge, it has the potential to expand the evidence available to appraise the challenges associated with each SDG. (Matu) Moreover, STI can inform the set of possible solutions to address the tradeoffs that the nature of the SDGs present. STI includes three strongly related domains, yet all three have important distinctions that need to be addressed. Science is devoted to the pursuit of knowledge using the study of the structure and behavior of the physical, natural and social world; Technology involves applying the acquired knowledge for a given end; and Innovation involves a new way of producing, delivering or using goods and services based on new technology, new business models or new ways of economic/social organization. The non-linear relationship between the three domains should be apparent. For example, certain Innovations can be based upon new technologies that were developed for the sake of a specific science. The creation of Innovations within a society can fundamentally change the social, physical or natural system's dynamic, which may lead to new questions when relating to the first domain of science.

Each of the three domains features a set of actors that have specific connections with each other and that interact with the other domains. For instance, scientists or researchers are key actors for science, organized in public/private research centers, universities, academies of sciences, professional societies or other research institutions. Governing bodies typically have a ministry responsible for scientific policy and funding agencies in charge of research programs. Regarding technology, scientists conduct applied research, and engineers and product/service developers develop and apply new technologies. Meanwhile, entrepreneurs, farmers, industry leaders and individuals develop better ways of producing or using goods and services, which fuels a surge in innovations. Actors in each domain benefit from their interaction with the others. Scientists draw new ideas and information from private companies, consumers and product developers to feed their process of production. Innovators are inspired by new scientific and technological

developments to create new products, services and processes. Engineers and applied scientists can adapt and apply new scientific discoveries by understanding the science behind them. STI is systemic—meaning that a well-organized STI system is composed of a series of actors, organized into domains or components, with important relationships among them. The particulars of each domain should be understood on its own in order to approach all three domains in an integrated and systematic way.

Current

Several challenges to applying STI have surfaced and, in a few cases, have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and political/social unrest. One challenge is the digital divide, in which access to technology is uneven and inequitable across and within countries. As the interconnected world relies heavily on digital technologies, countries and people without access to them may fall further behind. In addition, the scope and reach of social media, artificial intelligence algorithms, and government and private control of media have implications for personal privacy and freedoms. Full realization of the benefits of technology and mitigation of its detriments require appropriate regulation, infrastructure resources, and capabilities, as well as the capacity of individuals, communities, and companies to absorb and apply them. STI are major pillars for accelerating progress toward the SDGs. Research, development, deployment, and widespread diffusion of environmentally sound technologies are essential to advancing sustainable development. These Digital strategies can allow countries to leverage leapfrogging opportunities and achieve a faster rate of development than they would otherwise. Several start-ups for research and innovation are using blockchain technology to facilitate transportation, traceability, and input. We have two goals here; our first is to examine the current status of achieving the SDGs across the world and what resources and actions are needed to advance the SDGs in the context of the economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and geopolitical conflicts, building on the SDG Reports previously drafted by the UN; the UN's second goal is to give access to Least Developed Countries (LDC) the technology to create an innovative environment all while closing the technological gap.

Regional/International Frameworks

The exploration of the contribution of science, technology, and innovation (STI) to achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) is guided by both regional and international frameworks. These frameworks provide a structured approach to harnessing the potential of STI for sustainable development, fostering collaboration, and addressing common challenges. There are a few frameworks already set in place by the UN. The 2030 Agenda, which is one such framework, serves as the overarching international guideline, outlining 17 SDG and 169 separate targets. It strives to recognize the integral role that STI plays in achieving these goals and emphasizes the need for international cooperation to address global needs. One part of the 2030

Agenda, the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, urges collaborative efforts between national governments, private sector entities and the scientific community. It strives to enhance development, transfer and dissemination of environmentally sound technologies to support the SDGs. The HLPF (High-Level Political Forum), on Sustainable Development met annually under the supervision of the UN Economic and Social Council, reviews progress on SDGs. It provides a platform for members to share experiences and best practices related to the role of science, technology, and innovation in sustainable development. The STI Forum (Science, Technology, and Innovation Forum), organized by the UN, gathers stakeholders from various sectors to discuss and share insights on leveraging STI for sustainable development. It facilitates multi-stakeholder dialogues, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives and expertise.

Regionally the frameworks work more or less the same. The EU has framework programs, such as Horizon 2020 and its successor Horizon Europe, which allocates significant funding to research and innovation projects. These programs align with the SDGs and contribute to the advancement of sustainable technologies. STISA (African Union's Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa) is a framework developed by the African Union to promote and strengthen the role of STI in achieving the continent's development goals. It focuses on building research and innovation stations and addressing specific challenges faced by African nations. APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) promotes cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, including initiatives related to science, technology, and innovation. APEC member economies collaborate on projects that enhance technological capabilities and promote sustainable development. OAS (Organization of American States) fosters collaboration among countries in the Americas to address common challenges. It supports initiatives related to science, technology, and innovation, with an emphasis on using these elements for sustainable development in the region.

These regional and international frameworks provide a structured approach to aligning STI efforts with the SDGs, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that advancements in science and technology contribute effectively to sustainable development on a global scale. The commitment of nations and regions to these frameworks highlights the shared responsibility in addressing the intertwined challenges facing the world.

Action

The United Nations has taken several actions to explore and promote the contribution of science, technology, and innovation (STI) to achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs). Some key actions and initiatives include:

I. Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM): The UN established the TFM as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The TFM aims to support the implementation of SDGs by promoting collaboration among governments, the private sector, civil society, and the scientific community.

ii. High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF): The HLPF, convened annually, provides a platform for reviewing progress on SDGs, including the role of science, technology, and innovation. It allows member states to share experiences and lessons learned in utilizing STI for sustainable development.

iii. UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD): The CSTD plays a key role in advising the UN on issues related to science and technology, including their contribution to development goals. It regularly convenes meetings and discussions to promote dialogue among member states and other stakeholders.

iv. Partnerships and Collaborations: The UN encourages partnerships between governments, private sector entities, research institutions, and civil society organizations to leverage technology and innovation for sustainable development. Public-private partnerships, in particular, are emphasized for their potential to mobilize resources and expertise.

v. Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing: The UN promotes capacity building in developing countries to enhance their ability to harness the benefits of science, technology, and innovation. This includes initiatives to share knowledge, build technical skills, and provide access to technology.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of the contribution of science, technology, and innovation (STI) to achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) represents a critical and evolving direction in the global pursuit of a more sustainable future. The United Nations has been front and center in shaping a framework that acknowledges the intrinsic link between technological advancements and the realization of SDGs. The commitment to facilitate collaboration among governments, the private sector, civil society, and the scientific community ever present. This collaborative approach recognizes the interdependence of stakeholders in harnessing the potential of STI to address complex challenges.

Within this context, the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development plays a crucial role, providing guidance on incorporating STI into development strategies. Additionally, the periodic issue of the Global Sustainable Development Report ensures a comprehensive assessment of progress, challenges, and opportunities related to the integration of STI into the broader sustainable development narrative. Emphasizing the importance of partnerships, the UN encourages collaborative efforts that bring together governments, private sector entities, research institutions, and civil society organizations. These partnerships are recognized as catalysts for mobilizing resources, fostering innovation, and addressing technological gaps, particularly in developing countries. Capacity building remains a key focal point, with the UN actively promoting initiatives that enhance the technological capabilities of nations. By facilitating knowledge sharing, skill development, and access to technology, the organization aims to empower countries to leverage the benefits of STI in their personal developmental contexts

In essence, the commitment to exploring and enhancing the contribution of science, technology, and innovation to SDGs reflects a profound understanding of the dynamic and transformative potential these elements hold. As the international community continues its collective journey towards sustainable development, the UN's emphasis on inclusivity, collaboration, and informed decision-making in the realm of STI is indicative of a steadfast dedication to building a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable global future for all.

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