

Press Release 22 March, 2018

NEW DELHI. The international Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) for Development Conference opened in New Delhi with over 300 registered participants from 46 countries. The conference is the 18th in a line-up of global development conferences on the most pressing themes on the development agenda, which has been organized since 1999 in various cities across the world.

Pierre Jacquet, President of the Global Development Network, said in the opening remarks, “Make no mistake: Harvesting the fruits of Science, Technology & Innovation for development is one of the biggest development challenges of our time.” The Conference will discuss the many links between STI and the Sustainable Development Goals and how the power of STI can be harnessed to improve lives for the poor, and not just for profit.

In 2014, investments in research and development stood at 1.7 per cent of global GDP, up from 1.5 per cent in 2000. Worldwide, there were 1,098 researchers per million inhabitants in 2014, ranging from 63 in the least developed countries to 3,500 in Europe and Northern America.

There is wide disparity and a lot of catching up to do. One theme that dominated discussions was that while medium- and high-tech products continue to dominate manufacturing production in industrialized economies (where they contribute about 80 per cent of total manufacturing output), the share has barely reached 10 per cent in least developed countries (Source: UN-DESA).

The launch of the 2018 Industrial Development Report by UNIDO was another feature of the conference. The IDR2018 considers the importance of demand as an important driver of industrial development. Cecilia Ugaz Estrada, Director of the UNIDO Department of Policy Research and Statistics, noted that “technological innovation

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and the development of environmental goods are key to ensuring that demand-driven industrialization can be sustainable.”

Other themes included the many challenges of equity, unequal access to technology and the Internet; identifying and scaling up innovation in the global south, especially in health and agriculture, and in a milieu where research undertaken in developing countries is an underfunded and deprioritized area.

Editors Notes

- The Industrial Development Report launched at the conference is available [here](#)
- For further details about the conference, go to www.gdn.int
- Watch sessions live on www.gdn.int/live

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