



# General Assembly Plenary Committee Background Guide 2023

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# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2023 National Model United Nations Germany Conference (NMUN • Germany)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the General Assembly Plenary (GA). Aemin Becker is the Director and Bennet Rietdorf is the Assistant Director. Aemin has a Master's in International Security from Sciences Po Paris. She currently works in consulting at Booz Allen Hamilton. Bennet is completing his studies in International Relations and Economics at the University of Erfurt.

The topics under discussion for the General Assembly Plenary are:

1. Implementation of the Convention against Corruption
2. Science, Technology, and Innovation for Sustainable Development

As one of the six principal organs of the United Nations, the General Assembly is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative body of the organization. With universal membership, the General Assembly provides a global forum for world leaders to discuss a variety of topics across the United Nations system. In order to accurately simulate the committee, it will be key for delegates to focus on consensus building and best practice-setting approaches of the General Assembly, as opposed to operational work.

This Background Guide serves as an introduction to the topics for this committee. However, it is not intended to replace individual research. We encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in depth and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography to further your knowledge on these topics. In preparation for the Conference, each delegation will submit a Position Paper by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern) on 1 November 2023 in accordance with the guidelines in the [Position Paper Guide](#) and the [NMUN • Germany Position Papers](#) page.

Two resources, available to download from the [NMUN website](#), serve as essential instruments in preparing for the Conference and as a reference during committee sessions:

1. [NMUN Delegate Preparation Guide](#) - explains each step in the delegate process, from pre-Conference research to the committee debate and resolution drafting processes. Please take note of the information on plagiarism, and the prohibition on pre-written working papers and resolutions. Delegates should not start discussion on the topics with other members of their committee until the first committee session.
2. [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) - include the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure.

In addition, please review the mandatory [NMUN Conduct Expectations](#) on the NMUN website. They include the Conference dress code and other expectations of all attendees. We want to emphasize that any instances of sexual harassment or discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or disability will not be tolerated. If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the Conference itself, please contact Estefani Morales Zanoletti at [dsg.germany@nmun.org](mailto:dsg.germany@nmun.org).

We wish you all the best in your preparations and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Aemin Becker, Director  
Bennet Rietdorf, Assistant Director

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## Committee Overview

### **Introduction**

As per the *Charter of the United Nations* (1945), the General Assembly is one of the six main organs of the United Nations (UN).<sup>1</sup> It has universal membership and is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the UN rendering it a “unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter.”<sup>2</sup> Outcomes reached by the General Assembly may define new norms that can promote peace, human rights, and development.<sup>3</sup> As the normative center of the UN, the General Assembly is a generator of ideas, a place of international debate, and a hub for new concepts and practices in the political, economic, humanitarian, social, and legal spheres.<sup>4</sup>

### **Mandate, Functions, and Powers**

The mandate of the General Assembly is defined in Chapter IV (Articles 9-22) of the Charter.<sup>5</sup> As stipulated by Article 10, the General Assembly is broadly tasked with discussing “any questions or any matters within the scope of the [Charter] or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the [Charter],” and it may make relevant recommendations to Member States or the Security Council.<sup>6</sup> It further holds “informal interactive debates on current issues of critical importance to the international community.”<sup>7</sup>

Only resolutions adopted by the Plenary are put into effect as official resolutions of the General Assembly.<sup>8</sup> However, unlike Security Council resolutions enacted under Chapter VII of the Charter, General Assembly resolutions are not legally binding on Member States even after adoption by the Plenary.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, General Assembly resolutions represent policy norms agreed upon among Member States, and they often lead to concrete action by the Member States and the international community at large.<sup>10</sup>

Broadly speaking, the following non-exhaustive list summarizes the General Assembly’s mandate:

- The General Assembly **will generally**: request or consider studies and reports; make policy recommendations to promote international cooperation on matters of peace and security, human rights and fundamental freedoms, economic and social development, humanitarian assistance, culture, education, and health; promote the development and codification of international law; coordinate efforts by its subsidiary bodies; follow-up and review progress towards these activities; create subsidiary or ad hoc bodies and convene high-level thematic debates; discuss the regular UN budget.<sup>11</sup>
- The General Assembly **will not generally**: consider matters currently discussed in the Security Council; design and implement projects or programming on sustainable

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<sup>1</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Art. 7.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Workings of the General Assembly*. n.d.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1)*. 2005.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Ch. IV.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Art 10.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly*. n.d.

<sup>8</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. p. 68.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. p. 52.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid. p. 52.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*. n.d.; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. p. 13; United Nations, General Assembly. *Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly*. n.d.

development; direct other UN bodies to develop or implement specific projects or programs.<sup>12</sup>

### **Governance, Structure, and Membership**

All 193 UN Member States are represented in the General Assembly, with each Member State having one vote.<sup>13</sup> The General Assembly may grant Observer status to intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and non-Member States or entities, which allows them to participate in sessions but does not grant them voting rights.<sup>14</sup> The General Assembly makes the majority of its decisions via consensus.<sup>15</sup> When a vote is held, regular decisions require a simple majority of members present and voting, while important decisions require a two-thirds majority.<sup>16</sup>

The General Assembly has six Main Committees that are topically organized around the General Assembly's main fields of responsibility: the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee); the Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee); the Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (Third Committee); the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee); the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee); and the Legal Committee (Sixth Committee).<sup>17</sup> The Main Committees discuss agenda items assigned to them, adopt draft resolutions, and submit a report on their work to the Plenary.<sup>18</sup> The Plenary then considers these reports and "proceeds without debate to the adoption of the recommended resolutions and decisions. If adopted by consensus in the committee, the Plenary decides by consensus as well; likewise, if adopted by a vote in the committee, the Plenary votes on the resolution or decision in question."<sup>19</sup> The Plenary may also decide to address an issue without prior reference to a committee.<sup>20</sup> As a main organ of the UN, the General Assembly does not report to any other organ, while it receives an annual report on the work of the UN by the Secretary-General.<sup>21</sup>

Each year, the General Assembly's regular session begins in September and is considered in session throughout the year.<sup>22</sup> The busiest period, otherwise known as the "main part of the General Assembly," lasts from the start of the session in September until the end of December; it includes the general debate and most of the Main Committees' work.<sup>23</sup> The remainder of the year, or the "resumed part of the General Assembly," involves thematic debates, consultation processes, and working group meetings.<sup>24</sup> In addition to the regular session, the General Assembly may also hold special or emergency special sessions on individual issues at the request of either the Security Council or a majority of Member States.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*. n.d.; Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. p. 13.

<sup>13</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *United Nations Handbook 2021-2022*. 2021. p. 12; *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Art. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. p. 30.

<sup>15</sup> New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *United Nations Handbook 2021-2022*. 2021. p. 12.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*. n.d.

<sup>18</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. p. 68.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* p. 68.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*. n.d.

<sup>21</sup> *Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Art. 98.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*. n.d.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *All sessions*. n.d.; New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *United Nations Handbook 2021-2022*. 2021. p. 17.

The President of the General Assembly (PGA) is the mostly ceremonial head of the General Assembly, elected each year by a simple majority of Member States to a nonrenewable one-year term.<sup>26</sup> The PGA's duties are to facilitate Plenary sessions by directing discussion, managing the administration of meetings, and enforcing the General Assembly Rules of Procedure.<sup>27</sup> The PGA does not preside over all six General Assembly committees; rather, Chairs and Vice Chairs are the facilitators of individual committees while there are also 21 Vice-Presidents supporting the organizational functions of the PGA.<sup>28</sup> The PGA also performs executive duties, such as meeting regularly with the Secretary-General, the President of the Security Council, and the President of the Economic and Social Council; communicating with the press and the public; and organizing high-level meetings on certain thematic issues.<sup>29</sup>

## Annotated Bibliography

*Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>

*The Charter of the United Nations outlines in its Chapter IV the composition, functions and powers, voting, and procedures of the General Assembly. Further provisions on the workings and scope of the General Assembly can be found throughout the document. Delegates can gain an understanding of the purpose of the General Assembly, its mandate as well as its limits. Additionally, it may be helpful for delegates to differentiate the General Assembly's work from other main organs, particularly the Security Council.*

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: [https://research.un.org/ld.php?content\\_id=36397685](https://research.un.org/ld.php?content_id=36397685)

*The GA Handbook provides a comprehensive overview of the organization of the General Assembly. Delegates may learn about the mandate, the structure and role of the President of the General Assembly, its Vice-Presidents, Committees and Committee Chairs. It explains the membership including observers and its relation to UN entities and the UN system as a whole, as well as civil society. Additionally, delegates learn about the key events of the General Assembly, including the high-level week, the general debate, the high-level political forum, and thematic debates.*

United Nations, General Assembly. *Functions and powers of the General Assembly*. n.d. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/background.shtml>

*While this website provides a succinct overview of the functioning of the General Assembly, it is particularly interesting for further research following the links provided under each section. The sections include the functions and powers of the General Assembly, the main committees, the general debate, the decision-making process of the body, its subsidiary bodies, its regional groups, the special and emergency special sessions, and the revitalization agenda that has progressed over the past six years. Delegates should familiarize themselves especially with the mandate and general tasks the General Assembly assumes to ensure their proposed resolutions stay within the limits of the body's powers.*

## Bibliography

*Charter of the United Nations*. 1945. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>

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<sup>26</sup> Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. p. 16.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. pp. 17-18.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. pp. 16-17; United Nations, General Assembly. *Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly*. n.d.

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. *United Nations Handbook 2021-2022*. 2021. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Peace-Rights-and-Security/Our-work-with-the-UN/UN-Handbook-2021-22.pdf>

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations. *The GA Handbook A practical guide to the United Nations General Assembly*. 2017. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: [https://research.un.org/ld.php?content\\_id=36397685](https://research.un.org/ld.php?content_id=36397685)

United Nations, General Assembly. *All sessions*. n.d. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/sessions/>

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United Nations, General Assembly. *Subsidiary organs of the General Assembly*. n.d. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/about/subsidiary/index.shtml>

United Nations, General Assembly. *Workings of the General Assembly*. n.d. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://www.un.org/en/ga/>

United Nations, General Assembly. *2005 World Summit Outcome (A/RES/60/1)*. 2005. Retrieved 28 August 2022 from: <https://undocs.org/en/a/res/60/1>

# 1. Implementation of the Convention against Corruption

## Introduction

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), up to 25% of \$13 trillion USD in public spending each year is lost due to corruption.<sup>30</sup> The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development reported in 2020 that an estimated \$89 billion USD annually is lost to corruption in Africa, almost double what is received in foreign aid.<sup>31</sup> The misuse of public funds and other forms of corruption such as bribery, embezzlement, and abuse of power negatively impact sustainable development, defined as the long-lasting attainment of positive development outcomes such as the eradication of poverty, access to clean water, and gender equality.<sup>32</sup> Corruption has been linked to injustice, insecurity, poverty, lack of respect for human rights, and inhibited access to basic services (including healthcare, housing, clean water, and sanitation).<sup>33</sup>

The *United Nations Convention against Corruption* (UNCAC) (2003) is the only legally binding anti-corruption convention in existence.<sup>34</sup> After both signing and ratifying the UNCAC within their national legislation, Member States become bound by its provisions.<sup>35</sup> UNCAC covers five main areas: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange.<sup>36</sup> However, UNCAC does not define corruption; instead, it describes the current forms corruption takes and acknowledges that further forms may evolve in the future.<sup>37</sup> These forms include: corruption in the behavior of public officials and administration of the judiciary; mis-management of public finances and relationships with the private sector; money-laundering, bribes, solicitation, and embezzlement; and abuse of power.<sup>38</sup> UNCAC has been almost universally adopted, with 189 Member States as of 2023.<sup>39</sup>

A significant issue barring effective implementation of the UNCAC is asset recovery.<sup>40</sup> Defined within UNCAC Chapter V Articles 51-59, asset recovery refers to the process of returning the proceeds of corruption (such as money and/or other resources) to where they were taken from.<sup>41</sup> Asset recovery is important for sustainable development; the World Bank estimates that the US\$20-40 billion developing countries lose each year to corruption could have a large impact on sustainable development initiatives.<sup>42</sup> An additional issue preventing UNCAC's effective implementation is different societal roles and expectations for men and women, especially in the realms of leadership and decision-making, leading to corruption impacting women differently compared to other genders.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, women tend to be exposed to corruption more frequently in the course of their daily lives, and this further increases

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<sup>30</sup> United Nations Development Programme. *The cost of corruption*. 2022.

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Corruption and Economic Crime 2021 Annual Report*. 2023.

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Development Programme et al. *Corruption and sustainable development*. 2022; United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. *The Sustainable Development Goals*. 2023.

<sup>33</sup> United Nations Development Programme et al. *Corruption and sustainable development*. 2022.

<sup>34</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/RES/58/4)*. 2003; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *United Nations Convention Against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>35</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/RES/58/4)*. 2003; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *United Nations Convention Against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>36</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *United Nations Convention Against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>37</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Against Corruption: Q&A*.

<sup>38</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/RES/58/4)*. 2003.

<sup>39</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Signature and Ratification Status*. 2021.

<sup>40</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Highlights*. 2023.

<sup>41</sup> UNCAC Coalition. *Asset Recovery*. 2023.

<sup>42</sup> UNCAC Coalition. *Asset Recovery*. 2023.

<sup>43</sup> United Nations, Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge. *Gender and corruption*. 2023.



corruption's impact on them.<sup>44</sup> Overall, combating corruption by implementing the UNCAC remains an issue that is being tackled both internationally and regionally within and outside of the UN system.<sup>45</sup>

### ***International and Regional Framework***

In December 2000, General Assembly resolution 55/61 established the Ad Hoc Committee for the Negotiation of a Convention against Corruption.<sup>46</sup> After two years of negotiations and preparatory meetings, the General Assembly adopted the draft version of the UNCAC within resolution 58/4 on 31 October 2003.<sup>47</sup> UNCAC opened for signature at the High-level Political Signing Conference in Mexico, held December 2003, and entered into force once 30 States parties had both signed and ratified it.<sup>48</sup>

The *Monterrey Consensus on Finance and Development* (2002) and *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* (2002) both preceded the UNCAC as major international documents referencing corruption, drawing connections between combatting corruption and promoting sustainable development.<sup>49</sup> Adopted at the conclusion of the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in March 2002, Article 13 of the *Monterrey Consensus on Finance and Development* explicitly recognized fighting corruption as a priority for sustainable development.<sup>50</sup> The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015) succeeded the *Monterrey Consensus on Finance and Development*, adopted in July 2015 at the conclusion of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and supported by the General Assembly in resolution 69/313.<sup>51</sup> The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* encourages Member States to sign and ratify the UNCAC as well as existing States parties to continue reviewing UNCAC implementation.<sup>52</sup> It also named combatting corruption as essential for promoting peaceful, inclusive societies, as corruption takes away money that would otherwise go towards attaining sustainable development.<sup>53</sup> Adopted in September 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Article 19 of the *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* recognized corruption as a worldwide threat to sustainable development.<sup>54</sup> The *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development* was succeeded by the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

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<sup>44</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

<sup>45</sup> United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. *Battle against Corruption Vital to 2030 Agenda, General Assembly President Tells High-level Commemoration of Anti-Corruption Treaty's Adoption*. 2018; African Union, *African Union Convention On Preventing and Combating Corruption*, 2003; Organization of American States, *Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (B-58)*, 2023; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, *Annex H – Beijing Declaration on Fighting Corruption*, 2023; Council of Europe, *Criminal Law Convention on Corruption*, 2023; United Nations Development Programme et al. *Partnering in Anti-Corruption Knowledge: Using the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) for Technical Assistance and Anti-Corruption Programming*. 2014; World Bank, Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative. *About StAR*. 2023.

<sup>46</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *An effective international legal instrument against corruption (A/RES/55/61)*. 2001.

<sup>47</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Against Corruption: Q&A*. 2003; United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/RES/58/4)*. 2003.

<sup>48</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Against Corruption: Q&A*. 2003.

<sup>49</sup> United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development. *Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development*. 2002; United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development. *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development*. 2002.

<sup>50</sup> United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development. *Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development*. 2002.

<sup>51</sup> United Nations Third International Conference on Financing for Development. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda)*. 2015.

<sup>52</sup> United Nations Third International Conference on Financing for Development. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda)*. 2015.

<sup>53</sup> United Nations Third International Conference on Financing for Development. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda)*. 2015.

<sup>54</sup> United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development. *Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development*. 2002.

held in July 2012, titled “The Future We Want” and encapsulated within General Assembly resolution 66/288 (2012).<sup>55</sup> This resolution named corruption as a barrier to resource mobilization essential for combatting poverty and ensuring sustainable development, recognized the role of strong institutions in preventing and lessening the effects of corruption, and encouraged Member States to sign and ratify the UNCAC.<sup>56</sup>

In 2018, the then-President of the General Assembly Miroslav Lajčák commemorated the fifteenth anniversary of UNCAC’s adoption by drawing a direct link between UNCAC’s success and the achievement of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015).<sup>57</sup> The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* established 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aimed at specific aspects of improving peoples’ lives and ending poverty, and each SDG possesses several targets that delineate specific actions that could be taken to achieve each goal.<sup>58</sup> Then-President Lajčák explicitly connected UNCAC’s success to the achievement of SDG 16 (Peace, justice, and strong institutions).<sup>59</sup> Specifically, targets 16.4, 16.5, and 16.6 requires Member States to eliminate corruption by combating illicit financial flows, ensuring the return of stolen assets, reducing instances of bribery, and developing transparent and accountable institutions.<sup>60</sup> Combatting corruption has also been tied to achieving SDGs 3 (Good health and well-being), 4 (Quality education), 9 (Industry, innovation, and infrastructure), 14 (Life below water), and 15 (Life on land).<sup>61</sup>

In September 2020, the United Nations requested that the Secretary-General report to the General Assembly on progress towards addressing current and future challenges to sustainable development, especially as it pertained to achieving the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.<sup>62</sup> In September 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres responded with *Our Common Agenda: Report of the Secretary-General*.<sup>63</sup> In the report, Secretary-General Guterres provided twelve key proposals on action to achieve the SDGs.<sup>64</sup> Proposal Six, “Build trust,” recognized addressing corruption in line with the UNCAC as essential to ensuring justice in line with SDG 16.<sup>65</sup>

Regionally, the *African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption* (2003), *Organization of American States’ Inter-American Convention Against Corruption* (1996), *Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation’s Beijing Declaration on Fighting Corruption* (2014), and the *Council of Europe’s Criminal Law Convention on Corruption* (1999) each recognize the impact of corruption on economic sustainability, government legitimacy, and role in fostering criminal activity within their respective regions.<sup>66</sup> Each convention defines acts of corruption and commits States parties to both prevention and mitigation within

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<sup>55</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*. 2012.

<sup>56</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*. 2012.

<sup>57</sup> United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. *Battle against Corruption Vital to 2030 Agenda, General Assembly President Tells High-level Commemoration of Anti-Corruption Treaty’s Adoption*. 2018.

<sup>58</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2022.

<sup>59</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2022; United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. *Battle against Corruption Vital to 2030 Agenda, General Assembly President Tells High-level Commemoration of Anti-Corruption Treaty’s Adoption*. 2018.

<sup>60</sup> United Nations Development Programme et al. *Corruption and sustainable development*. 2022.

<sup>61</sup> United Nations Development Programme et al. *Corruption and sustainable development*. 2022.

<sup>62</sup> United Nations, Common Agenda. *Our Common Agenda*. 2023.

<sup>63</sup> United Nations, Common Agenda. *Our Common Agenda*. 2023.

<sup>64</sup> United Nations Publications. *Our Common Agenda: Report of the Secretary-General*. 2021.

<sup>65</sup> United Nations Publications. *Our Common Agenda: Report of the Secretary-General*. 2021.

<sup>66</sup> African Union, *African Union Convention On Preventing and Combating Corruption*, 2003; Organization of American States, *Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (B-58)*, 2023; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, *Annex H – Beijing Declaration on Fighting Corruption*, 2023; Council of Europe, *Criminal Law Convention on Corruption*, 2023.

their respective regions.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development established an Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia specifically dedicated to fighting corruption within those regions by promoting business integrity and providing anti-corruption resources to law enforcement.<sup>68</sup>

### **Role of the International System**

During its 74<sup>th</sup> session in 2020, the General Assembly adopted resolution 74/276 in which the body decided to convene the first-ever United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on anti-corruption measures and promoting international cooperation in 2021.<sup>69</sup> UNGASS 2021 discussed topics centered around corruption's effects on the healthcare sector, gender equality, asset recovery, and whistleblower protection.<sup>70</sup> Following the special session, the General Assembly adopted the political declaration *Our common commitment to effectively addressing challenges and implementing measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation* in 2021.<sup>71</sup> The declaration included advice for Member States on handling issues of bribery, money laundering, abuse of power, and other crimes related to corruption.<sup>72</sup> The declaration also recognized the role corruption plays on access to basic services such as food and water, especially in developing countries.<sup>73</sup>

General Assembly resolution 74/276 also encouraged the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to convene a youth forum to discuss how youth can contribute to the anti-corruption mission of the UNCAC.<sup>74</sup> The resolution invited a representative from this youth forum, chosen by the President of the General Assembly, to participate and give a statement at UNGASS 2021 summarizing the youth forum's discussions.<sup>75</sup> Organized by the UNODC New York Liaison Office, the forum occurred virtually from 24 to 26 May 2021 with the theme of "Countering Corruption through Collaboration: Youth Perspectives and Engagement."<sup>76</sup> Topics discussed included the effect of corruption on youth, youth engagement in anti-corruption measures, the expectations of youth for UNGASS and future General Assembly sessions, and the importance of transparency.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> African Union, *African Union Convention On Preventing and Combating Corruption*, 2003; Organization of American States, *Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (B-58)*, 2023; Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, *Annex H – Beijing Declaration on Fighting Corruption*, 2023; Council of Europe, *Criminal Law Convention on Corruption*, 2023.

<sup>68</sup> Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Anti-Corruption Network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia*, 2023.

<sup>69</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Special session of the General Assembly against corruption (A/RES/74/276)*. 2020.

<sup>70</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *UNGASS 2021 – World leaders gather at first-ever UN General Assembly Special Session against corruption*. 2023.

<sup>71</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>72</sup> United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. *Opening Special Session on Corruption, General Assembly Adopts Political Declaration with Road Maps to Help Countries Tackle Bribery, Money-Laundering, Abuse of Power*. 2021.

<sup>73</sup> United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. *Opening Special Session on Corruption, General Assembly Adopts Political Declaration with Road Maps to Help Countries Tackle Bribery, Money-Laundering, Abuse of Power*. 2021.

<sup>74</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Special session of the General Assembly against corruption (A/RES/74/276)*. 2020.

<sup>75</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Special session of the General Assembly against corruption (A/RES/74/276)*. 2020.

<sup>76</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *UNGASS Youth Forum – Countering Corruption through Collaboration: Youth Perspectives and Engagement*. 2021.

<sup>77</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *UNGASS Youth Forum – Countering Corruption through Collaboration: Youth Perspectives and Engagement*. 2021.

UNCAC Article 63 established the Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the UNCAC.<sup>78</sup> Comprised of Member States who have signed the UNCAC, the COSP functions as the UNCAC's main policymaking body, supports UNCAC implementation, and provides anti-corruption policy guidance to UNODC.<sup>79</sup> The Conference meets biennially and held its ninth session from 13 – 17 December 2021.<sup>80</sup> During this session, the COSP passed nine resolutions covering topics ranging from strengthening international cooperation in preventing and fighting corruption during crises, regionally strengthening UNCAC implementation, follow-ups to UNGASS 2021 and the *Marrakech Declaration on the Prevention of Corruption* (2011), and promoting anti-corruption education and awareness.<sup>81</sup> The COSP's next meeting is scheduled for 11 – 15 December 2023.<sup>82</sup>

The Implementation Review Group is a subsidiary intergovernmental body of COSP which provides oversight of the UNCAC review process as well as considers ways to provision technical assistance to support UNCAC's implementation.<sup>83</sup> The group convenes a session at least once annually during which States parties share information and discuss substantive issues related to the UNCAC's implementation.<sup>84</sup> The most recent session was the second resumed thirteenth session from 7 - 11 November 2022, and the fourteenth session was held from 12 - 16 June 2023.<sup>85</sup> In the report from the November 2022 session, the Implementation Review Group highlighted specific contributions from speakers discussing national anti-corruption strategies including the amendment and codification of laws criminalizing corruption and promoting ownership transparency.<sup>86</sup> The report also spotlighted the importance of information sharing mechanisms between national institutions for detecting corruption among public officials and the criticality of targeted capacity-building for Member States lacking the ability to otherwise effectively implement the UNCAC.<sup>87</sup>

The Implementation Review Group manages the Implementation Review Mechanism (IRM), which is the process by which States parties peer review each other's success in implementing the UNCAC.<sup>88</sup> UNODC acts as the secretariat for the IRM.<sup>89</sup> Each State party is reviewed by two randomly selected peer States parties, at least one of which is located in the same region.<sup>90</sup> The IRM has two cycles, the first of which began in 2010 and focused on criminalization, law enforcement, and international cooperation, and the second of which began in 2015 and focuses on prevention and asset recovery.<sup>91</sup> Though slated to end in June 2024, delegates at the November 2022 resumed session of the Implementation Review Group proposed that the end of the second cycle be postponed until December 2025 to account for

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<sup>78</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>79</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>80</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>81</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>82</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>83</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Group*. 2023.

<sup>84</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Group*. 2023.

<sup>85</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Group*. 2023.

<sup>86</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>87</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>88</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism*. 2023.

<sup>89</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism*. 2023.

<sup>90</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism*. 2023.

<sup>91</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism*. 2023.

delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>92</sup> To facilitate information sharing, the COSP developed a Self-assessment Checklist for States Parties to complete as part of the IRM.<sup>93</sup> The Self-Assessment Checklist requests States parties to rate their level of compliance with each UNCAC provision and provide requisite details explaining their responses, what actions they intend to take to achieve compliance, and what assistance they may require to do so.<sup>94</sup>

UNODC along with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) comprise the primary anti-corruption technical assistance providers within the UN system.<sup>95</sup> Recognizing this, UNODC and UNDP signed a memorandum of understanding in 2007 to work together on anti-corruption and criminal justice reform.<sup>96</sup> UNODC and UNDP cooperate on the initiative “Partnering in Anti-Corruption Knowledge”, which provides anti-corruption guidance for developing countries.<sup>97</sup> Individually, UNDP manages the Global Portal on Anti-Corruption for Development, which provides access to resources on addressing corruption’s negative effects on development, particularly as it pertains to human rights, gender equality, and climate change.<sup>98</sup> The portal provides training materials, tools and methodologies for mitigating corruption, and case studies with lessons learned from past anti-corruption measures.

To aid in implementation, UNODC published the “Legislative Guide for the Implementation of the Convention against Corruption” and the “Technical Guide to the United Nations Convention against Corruption” to provide Member States with assistance in the development and ratification of legislative requirements, technical advice, and a menu of policy options to support UNCAC’s implementation.<sup>99</sup> UNODC manages the Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge (TRACK) platform, which facilitates information exchange and provides tools, manuals, and publications to aid in implementing the UNCAC.<sup>100</sup> UNODC also partnered with the World Bank to create the Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative (StAR), which supports international work dedicated to preventing safe havens from being established for stolen assets.<sup>101</sup>

### **Asset Recovery**

Asset recovery is a fundamental provision within the UNCAC.<sup>102</sup> A specific provision within the UNCAC states that when public funds are embezzled, the requesting Member State should receive that property; for any other offenses, the property would be returned after the Member State produces proof of ownership or demonstrates that damage occurred.<sup>103</sup> The three stages of asset recovery are identification

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<sup>92</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>93</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism*. 2023.

<sup>94</sup> United Nations Development Programme. *Guidance Note - UNCAC Self-Assessments: Going Beyond the Minimum*. 2015.

<sup>95</sup> United Nations Development Programme et al. *Partnering in Anti-Corruption Knowledge: Using the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) for Technical Assistance and Anti-Corruption Programming*. 2014.

<sup>96</sup> United Nations Development Programme et al. *Partnering in Anti-Corruption Knowledge: Using the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) for Technical Assistance and Anti-Corruption Programming*. 2014.

<sup>97</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Partnering in Anti-Corruption Knowledge*. 2023.

<sup>98</sup> United Nations Development Programme, Anti-Corruption for Development. *About Us*. 2023.

<sup>99</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Legislative Guide for the Implementation of the Convention against Corruption*. 2023; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Technical Guide to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption*. 2023.

<sup>100</sup> United Nations, Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge. *Welcome to TRACK — UNODC’s central platform of tools and resources for anti-corruption knowledge*. 2023.

<sup>101</sup> World Bank, Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative. *About StAR*. 2023.

<sup>102</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Highlights*. 2023.

<sup>103</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Highlights*. 2023.

and tracking, freezing and confiscation, and recovery and return of assets.<sup>104</sup> The assets must be proven to have been unlawfully acquired before they are seized and returned.<sup>105</sup>

Despite its inclusion within the UNCAC, reports by the StAR Initiative and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) indicated that very little to no data is actually collected on asset recovery cases, increasing the difficulty of measuring the magnitude of this issue.<sup>106</sup> UNODC notes that this issue particularly impacts developing countries in which corrupt officials utilize national wealth to their own ends, depriving the state of assets needed for reconstruction, rehabilitation, and further development.<sup>107</sup> The StAR Initiative estimates that of the \$20-\$40 billion USD stolen from developing countries each year due to corruption, only \$147.2 million USD was returned between 2010 and 2012.<sup>108</sup> UNODC states that additional difficulties with asset recovery lie in reconciling the conflict between needing to reclaim stolen assets and aligning with Member States' domestic laws.<sup>109</sup>

Within the UN system, asset recovery is one of the two focuses for the second IRM review cycle which began in 2015.<sup>110</sup> The Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery specifically focuses on this issue and has met sixteen times since its founding.<sup>111</sup> The COSP decided in resolution 9/7, *Enhancing the use of beneficial ownership information to facilitate the identification, recovery and return of proceeds of crime*, that the working group should focus on providing information regarding beneficial ownership and its role in facilitating asset recovery from 2022-2023.<sup>112</sup> In the working group's most recent meeting during the November 2022 second resumed session of the thirteenth IRM session, the working group's report highlighted the importance of beneficial ownership transparency as facilitating asset recovery and the development of effective legal frameworks.<sup>113</sup> Pursuant to COSP resolution 9/2, *Our common commitment to effectively addressing challenges and implementing measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthening international cooperation: follow-up to the special session of the General Assembly against corruption*, this working group prepared a separate report collecting information on international asset returns to be published at the end of its November 2022 meeting.<sup>114</sup> This report noted the following major issues preventing international asset recovery: lack of international cooperation with legal assistance and enforcement of confiscation orders, difficulties in identifying

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<sup>104</sup> UNCAC Coalition. *Asset Recovery*. 2023.

<sup>105</sup> UNCAC Coalition. *Asset Recovery*. 2023.

<sup>106</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference Room Paper prepared by the StAR Initiative: Mapping international recoveries and returns of stolen assets under UNCAC: an insight into the practice of cross-border repatriation of proceeds of corruption over the past 10 years*. 2021.

<sup>107</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Highlights*. 2023.

<sup>108</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference Room Paper prepared by the StAR Initiative: Mapping international recoveries and returns of stolen assets under UNCAC: an insight into the practice of cross-border repatriation of proceeds of corruption over the past 10 years*. 2021.

<sup>109</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Highlights*. 2023.

<sup>110</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism*. 2023.

<sup>111</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>112</sup> United Nations, Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report on the meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022 (CAC/COSP/WG.2/2022/4)*. 2023.

<sup>113</sup> United Nations, Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report on the meeting of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022 (CAC/COSP/WG.2/2022/4)*. 2023.

<sup>114</sup> United Nations, Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery. *Collection of information on international asset returns, including challenges, good practices and lessons learned (CAC/COSP/WG.2/2022/3)*. 2022.

ownership of assets under investigation, problems with linking assets to specific criminal offenses, and different standards of proof between legal systems.<sup>115</sup>

Outside of the UN system, the International Anti-Corruption Coordination Centre provides technical assistance to countries conducting corruption investigations by supporting prosecutions for recovering stolen assets, ultimately seeking to expeditiously return stolen assets to the countries they were stolen from.<sup>116</sup> The Centre has handled more than 170 cases since its founding in 2017.<sup>117</sup> The StAR Initiative and the work of the GlobE Network also aim to facilitate international cooperation as it pertains to asset recovery.<sup>118</sup> The StAR Initiative published the “Asset Recovery Handbook: A Guide for Practitioners” in 2020 to guide individuals in recovering stolen assets in foreign jurisdictions.<sup>119</sup> The initiative also helps countries develop anti-corruption legislation related to asset recovery, open asset recovery cases, and trace and return stolen assets to their countries of origin, helping 15 countries to do so in 2022.<sup>120</sup> The GlobE Network was launched during UNGASS 2021 and aims to promote global cooperation in ending corruption.<sup>121</sup> They focus on complementing the work of existing regional and national anti-corruption organizations, including regional Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Networks (ARINs) within the Asia Pacific, Caribbean, East Africa, Southern Africa, West Africa, and West and Central Asia.<sup>122</sup> Each regional ARIN promotes information sharing among its members to facilitate the tracking and recovery of stolen assets.<sup>123</sup>

### ***The Gendered Dimension of Corruption***

According to the UNODC’s Track Platform, gender relations’ differing effects on society, including its effect on the delineation of labor and decision-making roles, lead to corruption having a different effect on women as compared to other genders.<sup>124</sup> For example, a 2011 study on female political representation in Africa found the presence of corruption significantly reduces the odds of female representation in African parliaments as it denies women the opportunity to run and hold those political positions.<sup>125</sup> UNDP notes that women are exposed to corruption when accessing basic services such as water and healthcare, involving themselves in politics, having their rights violated (including in situations of trafficking), and experiencing negligence and mismanagement.<sup>126</sup> As per the UNODC, one reason corruption impacts women more than other genders is because they request support from state services more frequently,

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<sup>115</sup> United Nations, Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Asset Recovery. *Collection of information on international asset returns, including challenges, good practices and lessons learned (CAC/COSP/WG.2/2022/3)*. 2022.

<sup>116</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>117</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>118</sup> United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023;

<sup>119</sup> Jean-Pierre Brun et al. *Asset Recovery Handbook: A Guide for Practitioners, 2nd Edition*. 2020.

<sup>120</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *A Global Community United Against Corruption*. 2022.

<sup>121</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *UNGASS 2021 – World leaders gather at first-ever UN General Assembly Special Session against corruption*. 2023.

<sup>122</sup> United Nations, Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities. *Frequently Asked Questions & Answers*. 2023; United Nations, Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities. *Anti-corruption law enforcement networks and organizations*. 2023.

<sup>123</sup> United Nations, Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities. *Anti-corruption law enforcement networks and organizations*. 2023.

<sup>124</sup> United Nations, Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge. *Gender and corruption*. 2023.

<sup>125</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

<sup>126</sup> Sida. *Gender Tool Box (Brief)*. 2015.

and services affected by corrupt practices such as bribes or resource embezzlement may have less resources to provide.<sup>127</sup> Additionally, UNODC found that women may be perceived as easier targets and are more frequently excluded from social networks that utilize corruption to benefit their mainly male members.<sup>128</sup>

The UNGASS 2021 special session on corruption recognized the link between gender and corruption in paragraph 69 of the adopted political declaration.<sup>129</sup> The paragraph stated that States parties will continue recognizing gender equality and women empowerment by acknowledging the differing impact of projects, programs, legislation, and policies on women as opposed to other genders.<sup>130</sup> UNODC's 2013 guidance note on "Gender mainstreaming in the work of UNODC" recognized the need for gender sensitive anti-corruption training for effective UNCAC implementation.<sup>131</sup> UNODC's 2021 guidance note expanded to include the importance of performing gender analysis and gender-responsive evaluations when gathering data and evaluating programs.<sup>132</sup>

In 2020, UNODC published the report "The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption," which elaborated on the relationship between gender inequality and corruption, the impact of gender on corruption (and conversely, corruption on gender), international frameworks relating to gender and anti-corruption, and national policy responses that accounted for gender to uphold international commitments.<sup>133</sup> To solve these issues, the report recommends: disaggregating data on corruption by gender to better measure disparities and complement data collection with qualitative research; considering societal gender norms when deploying solutions to enhance their effectiveness; reducing the gendered impact of corruption by improving inclusivity and thereby dismantling existing corruption networks, and; exploring ways to include gender analysis within anti-corruption initiatives.<sup>134</sup> The report also noted that women who are unable to pay bribes to access resources may instead trade sexual favors, but that more research on the scope of this issue is needed.<sup>135</sup> In line with this, the U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre notes that efforts to decrease instances of corruption need to account for gender in order to be more effective, and that anti-corruption efforts are closely related to supporting gender equality.<sup>136</sup> The Centre also notes that promoting women's political participation can reduce corruption since many women are more impacted by corruption compared to other genders, and thus have a strong interest in combatting corruption within political systems.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

<sup>128</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

<sup>129</sup> United Nations, Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge. *Gender and corruption*. 2023.

<sup>130</sup> United Nations, Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge. *Gender and corruption*. 2023.

<sup>131</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Guidance Note for UNODC Staff: Gender mainstreaming in the work of UNODC*. 2013.

<sup>132</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Guidance Note for UNODC Staff: Gender mainstreaming in the work of UNODC*. 2021.

<sup>133</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

<sup>134</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

<sup>135</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

<sup>136</sup> U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre. *Corruption and gender equality: A summary of existing research*. 2021.

<sup>137</sup> U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre. *Corruption and gender equality: A summary of existing research*. 2021.



## Conclusion

Adopted by the General Assembly within resolution 58/4, the UNCAC is the only legally binding anti-corruption convention in existence and has been almost universally adopted.<sup>138</sup> Combatting corruption has been linked to several positive development outcomes, including SDGs 3 (Good health and well-being), 4 (Quality education), 9 (Industry, innovation, and infrastructure), 14 (Life below water), 15 (Life on land), and 16 (Peace, justice, and strong institutions).<sup>139</sup> The COSP, Implementation Review Group, IRM, UNODC, and UNDP all play important roles in reviewing and supporting UNCAC's implementation.<sup>140</sup> Together, these entities promote international cooperation, measure UNCAC's status, and note barriers to implementation such as ineffective information-sharing mechanisms and the need for technical assistance within countries lacking the resources to implement anti-corruption measures.<sup>141</sup> Asset recovery is a fundamental UNCAC provision covering the return of stolen assets to their place of origin.<sup>142</sup> Issues with implementing this provision include little to no data collected on asset recovery cases, stronger impacts on developing countries, ensuring alignment with domestic laws, and provisioning technical assistance.<sup>143</sup> Finally, corruption impacts women differently compared to other genders, and proposed solutions to corruption should account for this in order to be more effective.<sup>144</sup>

## Further Research

How can the General Assembly work with UN entities, regional organizations, and Member States in implementing the UNCAC's provisions? In what ways can the General Assembly further cooperate with UNODC's work in operationalizing UNCAC implementation? Where can the General Assembly contribute to promote information sharing and other initiatives pertaining to asset recovery? What can the General Assembly do to mitigate the gendered impacts of corruption?

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<sup>138</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Convention against Corruption (A/RES/58/4)*. 2003; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *United Nations Convention Against Corruption*. 2023; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Against Corruption: Q&A*. 2003; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Signature and Ratification Status*. 2021.

<sup>139</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. 2022; United Nations, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. *Battle against Corruption Vital to 2030 Agenda, General Assembly President Tells High-level Commemoration of Anti-Corruption Treaty's Adoption*. 2018; United Nations Development Programme et al. *Corruption and sustainable development*. 2022.

<sup>140</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. 2023*; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Group. 2023*; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism. 2023*; United Nations Development Programme et al. *Partnering in Anti-Corruption Knowledge: Using the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) for Technical Assistance and Anti-Corruption Programming*. 2014.

<sup>141</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. 2023*; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Group. 2023*; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism. 2023*; United Nations Development Programme et al. *Partnering in Anti-Corruption Knowledge: Using the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) for Technical Assistance and Anti-Corruption Programming*. 2014.

<sup>142</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Highlights*. 2023.

<sup>143</sup> United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Conference Room Paper prepared by the StAR Initiative: Mapping international recoveries and returns of stolen assets under UNCAC: an insight into the practice of cross-border repatriation of proceeds of corruption over the past 10 years*. 2021; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Convention Highlights*. 2023; United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023.

<sup>144</sup> United Nations, Tools and Resources for Anti-Corruption Knowledge. *Gender and corruption*. 2023; United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *The Time Is Now: Addressing the Gender Dimensions of Corruption*. 2020.

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[https://www.unodc.org/documents/corruption/Publications/2020/THE\\_TIME\\_IS\\_NOW\\_2020\\_12\\_08.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/corruption/Publications/2020/THE_TIME_IS_NOW_2020_12_08.pdf)

*This report by UNODC discusses the relationship between gender and corruption, including statistics demonstrating this relationship and its economic and societal impacts. The report also includes information on other international frameworks related to this topic, national policy responses to address this relationship, and case studies from three Member States describing three policy responses and their effectiveness pertaining to this issue. By reading this report, delegates will gain a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between gender and anti-corruption initiatives that will serve as a starting point for research into solutions to propose in their position papers and while at conference.*

United Nations Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption. *Report of the Implementation Review Group on its second resumed thirteenth session, held in Vienna from 7 to 11 November 2022*. 2023. Retrieved 13 May 2023 from:

<https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/WorkingGroups/ImplementationReviewGroup/7-11Nov2022/CAC-COSP-IRG-2022-6-Add.2/2228278E.pdf>

*This report was produced at the end of the most recent session of the UNCAC Implementation Review Group, held in November 2022. This document summarizes the various topics discussed at the meeting, including commentary on the performance of the IRM and the state of UNCAC implementation. It also includes comments by States parties on technical assistance and a follow-up report to UNGASS 2021. States parties highlighted successes as well as challenges during this session. This report will grant delegates an understanding of current issues to UNCAC's implementation faced by States parties and within the UN system.*

United Nations Development Programme. *Guidance Note - UNCAC Self-Assessments: Going Beyond the Minimum*. 2015. Retrieved 11 May 2023 from: <https://www.undp.org/publications/guidance-note-uncac-self-assessments-going-beyond-minimum>

*This guidance note published by the UNDP provides States parties with advice for conducting the voluntary UNCAC Self-Assessments as part of the IRM review cycle. The note includes introductory information on the IRM, benefits of completing the self-assessment, a recommended methodology and timeline for completing the Self-Assessment and finishing the IRM process by the deadline, and a list of UN and non-UN development partners and important terminology. By reading this guidance note, delegates will better understand the IRM process and its role in facilitating UNCAC's implementation.*

Jean-Pierre Brun et al. *Asset Recovery Handbook: A Guide for Practitioners, 2nd Edition*. 2020. Retrieved 14 May 2023 from: <https://star.worldbank.org/publications/asset-recovery-handbook-guide-practitioners-second-edition>

*This handbook was published as part of the StAR Initiative, a World Bank and UNODC partnership. The book provides practical advice to practitioners seeking to reclaim stolen assets located in foreign jurisdictions. It includes an overview of the process of asset recovery and considerations for prosecutions, securing evidence, and eventually confiscating and reclaiming the stolen assets. Delegates will find this handbook useful for understanding the process behind and difficulties involved with international asset recovery.*

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Implementation Review Mechanism*. 2023. Retrieved 11 May 2023 from: <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/implementation-review-mechanism.html>

*This webpage describes the IRM, including its guiding principles, links to its basic explanatory documents, its purpose, and current country pairings for the first and the*

second, current review cycle. The site also provides a link to country profile pages, including the executive summaries for each participating State Party's completed review, full country review reports and self-assessments, ratification information, and information on national legislation. Delegates will benefit from the site's clear explanation of the IRM and additional resources useful for researching their represented Member State.

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## 2. Science, Technology, and Innovation for Sustainable Development

*“By harnessing science, technology, and innovation, the world can transform its relationship with nature, reverse rising inequality, and build resilience against the next crisis of conflict, natural disaster, or future pandemic.”<sup>145</sup>*

### Introduction

Human development has been linked to the creation of new technologies and the increasing digitalization of services and tools, which has facilitated solving modern issues.<sup>146</sup> According to the United Nations (UN) Committee for Development Policy, science, technology and innovation (STI) are key tools for furthering sustainable development.<sup>147</sup> The Brundtland Commission defined the concept of sustainable development as the assurance of long-term economic and environmental security without compromising the opportunities of future generations through the integration and recognition of social, environmental and economic concerns in decision-making processes.<sup>148</sup> The United Nations Interagency Task Team on STI for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defines “science” as the striving for knowledge, which is achieved through “systematic studies of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world, and societies.”<sup>149</sup> Technology can be understood as the transfer of acquired knowledge into practice which is serving a particular purpose.<sup>150</sup> Innovation is a “new way of producing, delivering, or using goods and services” using advanced forms of technologies, economic and social strategies, and/or project management.<sup>151</sup>

The UN Committee for Development Policy states that STIs are drivers of productivity and economic prosperity, and that STI are essential for addressing both current and upcoming challenges at the national and global level.<sup>152</sup> According to the World Economic Forum Report *Unlocking Technology for the Global Goals* (2020), the potential of STI to enhance education, health, food security, decent jobs, renewable energy, and other areas of development is immense.<sup>153</sup> Emphasizing the use of STI in sustainable development policies and frameworks has been the core of several agreements within the UN system and led to the establishment of systems enabling the use of STI to encourage sustainable development.<sup>154</sup>

However, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) reports that overall rapid scientific and technological development poses not only new challenges for policy making, but also might “outpace the capacity of governments and society to adapt to the changes that new technologies bring about, as they affect labor markets, [and] raise ethical questions.”<sup>155</sup> In addition, the UNCTAD *Technology and Innovation Report* of 2021 underlined that the use of modern technologies related to advancing

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<sup>145</sup> United Nations Economic and Social Council. *Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals*. 2022.

<sup>146</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*. 2021.

<sup>147</sup> United Nations Committee for Development Policy. *Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development*. 2013.

<sup>148</sup> Emas, R. *The Concept of Sustainable Development: Definition and Defining Principles*. 2015.

<sup>149</sup> United Nations Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (IATT) Sub-Working Group on STI Roadmaps. *Guidebook for the preparation of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2021.

<sup>151</sup> United Nations Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (IATT) Sub-Working Group on STI Roadmaps. *Guidebook for the preparation of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2021.

<sup>152</sup> United Nations Committee for Development Policy. *Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development*. 2013.

<sup>153</sup> World Economic Forum. *Unlocking Technology for the Global Goals*. 2020.

<sup>154</sup> High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *Secretariat Background Note: Mobilizing science, technology, and innovation and strengthening the science-policy-society interface*. 2021.

<sup>155</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *The Impact of Rapid technological change on sustainable development*. 2019.

development is still unevenly distributed.<sup>156</sup> Half of the world's population, an estimated 3.7 billion people, do not use the internet, effectively excluding them from many of the benefits of being online, such as access to education, jobs, and information sources that can help protect health, safety, and rights.<sup>157</sup> In particular, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), meaning low-income countries, are facing serious structural impediments to sustainable development and are highly vulnerable to economic, and environmental shocks.<sup>158</sup> To achieve inclusive and sustainable development, LDCs must be supported in terms of capacity building, technology access, and innovation.<sup>159</sup>

### ***International and Regional Framework***

The Brundtland Commission's report *Our Common Future* (1987) significantly shaped the understanding of environment and development policy by linking the issues of economic development and environmental stability.<sup>160</sup> The Commission's definition of sustainable development was adopted by the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio Summit) within the outcome document, the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (1992), with the goal of creating new and equal international partnerships to achieve global agreements in the areas of development and the environment.<sup>161</sup> At the Rio Summit, Member States called for environmental protection to be placed at the heart of sustainable development.<sup>162</sup> Principles 8 and 9 of the *Rio Declaration* emphasize that scientific and technical knowledge should be used to minimize environmental harm during development processes.<sup>163</sup>

The *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) (1992) recognized the importance of STI in addressing climate change and encouraged the development and deployment of STI to achieve sustainable development.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, *Agenda 21* (1992), followed by the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)* (2000), highlighted the importance of technology and science transfer to combat climate change and global poverty, laying the foundations for the establishment and further development of the role of STIs.<sup>165</sup> Following the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the outcome document "The Future We Want" was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 66/288

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<sup>156</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*. 2021.

<sup>157</sup> High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *Secretariat Background Note: Mobilizing science, technology, and innovation and strengthening the science-policy-society interface*. 2021; The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health. *Growing up in a digital world: benefits and risks*. 2018.

<sup>158</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Least Developed Countries (LDCs)*. n.d.

<sup>159</sup> United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda. *Science, technology, and innovation for sustainable development in global partnership for development beyond 2015*.

<sup>160</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I))*. 1992; United Nations Brundtland Commission. *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. 1987.

<sup>161</sup> United Nations Brundtland Commission. *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*. 1987; United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. *A new blueprint for international action on the environment*.

<sup>162</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I))*. 1992; United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. *A new blueprint for international action on the environment*.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992.

<sup>165</sup> United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. 1992; United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*. 2000.



(2012).<sup>166</sup> This document established the High-Level Political Forum, a UN body which sets practical measures for implementing sustainable development.<sup>167</sup>

These efforts resulted in the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development* (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (2015), adopted within General Assembly resolution 69/313 (2015), which describes 100 concrete policy actions to implement STI initiatives, promotes greater transparency for all stakeholders, and clarifies the issue of long-term financing for sustainable development.<sup>168</sup> The *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* constitutes the global framework for financing sustainable development and includes specific recommendations for Member States on issues of technology and capacity building or international cooperation for the efficient use of STI for sustainable development.<sup>169</sup>

Within the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, Member States committed to promoting STI in preparation for the adoption of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda).<sup>170</sup> The 2030 Agenda was adopted in General Assembly resolution 70/1 (2015) and includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets, and 244 indicators that aim to promote sustainable development.<sup>171</sup> The SDGs are defined by the UN as a worldwide action plan to address global challenges, fulfill basic needs, and promote sustainable development.<sup>172</sup> The following goals center the use of STIs to achieve the 2030 Agenda: SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure), 14 (life below water), and 17 (partnerships for the goals).<sup>173</sup>

Regionally, the African Union (AU) emphasizes the significance of STIs in its *Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA)* (2024), recognizing STIs as a versatile tool that facilitates the attainment of development objectives.<sup>174</sup> Moreover, the AU emphasizes in the *Agenda 2063 "The Africa we want"* (2013), which is Africa's development blueprint for inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development, that sustainable growth, competitiveness and economic transformation require sustained investment in STIs in areas such as agriculture, clean energy, education and health.<sup>175</sup> Additionally, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted the *ASEAN Implementation Plan Of Action On Science, Technology And Innovation 2016-2025 (APASTI)* (2016) during its 9th Informal ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology.<sup>176</sup> APASTI addresses the challenges of the upcoming decade by outlining strategic actions, timelines, and derived indicators.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*. 2012; United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *High-Level Political Forum*.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/69/313)*. 2015.

<sup>169</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/69/313)*. 2015.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

<sup>172</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015; United Nations, General Assembly. *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*. 2000.

<sup>173</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015; United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. *Guidebook for the Preparation of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2020.

<sup>174</sup> African Union. *"On the Wings of Innovation" Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024)*. 2023.

<sup>175</sup> African Union. *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*. 2013.

<sup>176</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations. *ASEAN Implementation Plan Of Action On Science, Technology And Innovation 2016-2025*. 2016.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

## **Role of the International System**

The General Assembly recognized the important role of STI in accelerating progress towards the SDGs, enabling the full participation of developing countries in the global economy and expediting the pace of economic diversification and transformation, in resolutions 74/229 (2019), 75/316 (2021) and 76/213 (2022).<sup>178</sup> The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), which assists Member States in translating their global commitments to the SDGs into national action, published an overview of the main STI mechanisms and key actors and stakeholders within its *Operational Note: Implementing Science, Technology and Innovation for SDGs Roadmaps* (2020).<sup>179</sup>

In order to support the implementation of the SDGs, the Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) was established by the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda* (2015).<sup>180</sup> The main objective of the TFM is to support the development and implementation of STI for sustainable development, with HLPF's assistance.<sup>181</sup> In order to achieve this, the TFM aims to foster cooperation and alliances among various stakeholders including Member States, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, UN entities, and other interested parties, which is crucial to address global sustainable development challenges.<sup>182</sup> According to UN DESA, the TFM contains four components which promote coordination, coherence, and cooperation within the UN system on STI-related matters for sustainable development and strengthen capacity-building initiatives by advocating for enhanced efficiency between all stakeholders:<sup>183</sup> The four components are: the United Nations Interagency Task Team on STI for the SDGs (UN IATT); the 10-Member Group of High-level Representatives of Scientific Community, Private Sector and Civil Society (10-Member Group); the Multi-stakeholder Forum on STI for the SDGs (STI-Forum); and the 2030 Connect online platform.<sup>184</sup>

The UN IATT, was established by UN DESA and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and is mandated to promote coordination and collaboration at the working level among professionals within the UN system.<sup>185</sup> The 10-Member Group, appointed by the Secretary-General, brings expertise and experience across disciplines to support the TFM.<sup>186</sup> The 10-Member Group is mandated to work with the IATT to prepare the annual STI-Forum (the third component) and to support the fourth and final component, the 2030 Connect online platform.<sup>187</sup> The STI Forum is convened by the President of the

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<sup>178</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development (A/RES/76/213)*. 2021; United Nations, General Assembly. *Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development (A/RES/74/229)*. 2019; United Nations, General Assembly. *Impact of rapid technological change on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets (A/RES/75/316)*. 2021.

<sup>179</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Sustainable Development Division. *UN Interagency Task Team on STI for the SDGs (IATT)*; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *About us*. n.d.

<sup>180</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*. 2015.

<sup>181</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/69/313)*. 2015.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Sustainable Development Division. *UN Interagency Task Team on STI for the SDGs (IATT)*.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *UN Interagency Task Team on STI for the SDGs (IATT) - One of the pillars of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism*. 2021.

<sup>186</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Sustainable Development Division. *UN 10-Member-Group of High-level Representatives of Civil Society, Private Sector and Scientific Community to support the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (10 Member Group)*.

<sup>187</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM) - Harnessing Science, Technology and Innovation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Sustainable Development Division. *UN 10-Member-Group of High-level Representatives of Civil Society, Private Sector and Scientific Community to support the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism (10 Member Group)*.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to discuss STI cooperation areas for SDG implementation.<sup>188</sup> 2030 Connect includes a comprehensive mapping of existing STI initiatives, mechanisms, and programs and facilitates the exchange of relevant scientific publications on STI for sustainable development by making them openly accessible.<sup>189</sup>

In the 2017 session of the STI Forum, Member States highlighted that "STI roadmaps and action plans are needed at subnational, national and global levels, and should include measures for tracking progress."<sup>190</sup> The STI Forum defines STI roadmaps as strategic plans that outline a country's or organization's goals and objectives for the development and implementation of STI initiatives to achieve sustainable development.<sup>191</sup> Following the 2017 session of the STI Forum, the UN IATT and the 10-Member Group published a *Guidebook for the preparation of STI for SDGs Roadmaps* (2018).<sup>192</sup> The Guidebook is an initial guide for building STI roadmaps as a policymaking and communication tool for Member States.<sup>193</sup> It also analyzes the gaps in national STI implementation and considers the progress in their usage for the achievement of the SDGs.<sup>194</sup> The Global Pilot Programme on STI for the SDGs Roadmaps was launched to test the Guidebook as a policymaking and communication tool for Member States as well as to maximize the opportunities and mitigate the risks of STIs to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs by promoting good practices and knowledge sharing on design and implementation of such roadmaps.<sup>195</sup> Major barriers in the implementation of the STI Roadmaps are the lack of a specific budget, obtaining up-to-date data, coordination among agencies, and building trust and stakeholder engagement.<sup>196</sup>

During the HLPF's annual session in 2019, it was announced that a group of five pilot countries - Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya and Serbia - join the *Global Pilot Programme* "as part of the national processes to design and implement roadmaps contributing to the achievement of sustainable development strategies."<sup>197</sup> These Member States are testing the approach and methodology of the Guidebook for feasibility in the context of their national development plans.<sup>198</sup> The UN DESA *Summary of*

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<sup>188</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Sustainable Development Division. *STI Forum - Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum)*.

<sup>189</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Sustainable Development Division. *Online Platform (2030 Connect) - One of the pillars of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism*.

<sup>190</sup> United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. *UN STI Forum 2021 High-Level Side Event on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps - Call for Action: Scaling up the Global Pilot Programme on STI for the SDGs roadmaps*. 2021.

<sup>191</sup> Economic and Social Council. *Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, Meetings Coverage and Press Releases (ECOSOC/7083)*. 2022.

<sup>192</sup> United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (UN IATT). *Global Pilot Programme on Science, Technology and Innovation for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2018.

<sup>193</sup> United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (UN IATT). *Global Pilot Programme on Science, Technology and Innovation for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2018.

<sup>194</sup> United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals (UN IATT). *Global Pilot Programme on Science, Technology and Innovation for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2018.

<sup>195</sup> European Commission and United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team. *Progress Report of the Global Pilot Programme on STI for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2021; United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs. *UN STI Forum 2021 High-Level Side Event on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps - Call for Action: Scaling up the Global Pilot Programme on STI for the SDGs roadmaps*. 2021.

<sup>196</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *UN Interagency Task Team on STI for the SDGs (IATT) - One of the pillars of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism*. 2021.

<sup>197</sup> Economic and Social Council. *Global Pilot Programme on STI for SDGs Roadmaps*.

<sup>198</sup> Economic and Social Council. *Global Pilot Programme on STI for SDGs Roadmaps*; United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs. *Summary of Progress Report of the Global Pilot Programme on STI for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2020.

*Progress Report of the Global Pilot Programme on STI for SDGs Roadmaps* (2020) reports that so far, the pilot countries have made varying levels of progress. 199 The report compares current results, identifies problems, and discusses lessons learned.<sup>200</sup> According to the report, a support mechanism for the second wave of countries to join the pilot program will be established, called "Partnership in Action."<sup>201</sup> Furthermore, UN DESA notes three current challenges in the report: the "availability of updated data and relevant expertise", "getting stakeholder involvement and active participation", and the "availability of updated data and relevant expertise to do the assessment to develop priorities".<sup>202</sup>

The HLPF, the successor of the Commission on Sustainable Development, is the primary body for guiding implementation of the SDGs, tracking indicators, addressing emerging issues, and driving policy coherence, which includes providing policy guidance.<sup>203</sup> The HLPF meets annually under the auspices of ECOSOC and every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly.<sup>204</sup> HLPF states in its secretariat background note *Mobilizing science, technology, and innovation and strengthening the science-policy-society interface* (2021) that the alignment between STIs and SDGs remains weak.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, policymakers on national and international level have to assess capabilities to equitably use, adopt, and adapt these technologies.<sup>206</sup> According to the HLPF, gaps in financial support and capacity building as well as differential accessibility for various social groups to new technologies and knowledge about them limit the contribution of STI to the achievement of the SDGs.<sup>207</sup>

According to UNCTAD itself, UNCTAD helps Member States access the benefits of a globalized economy more fairly and effectively by providing analysis, facilitating consensus-building, and offering technical assistance.<sup>208</sup> Additionally, UNCTAD supports Member States in using trade, investment, finance, and technology as vehicles for inclusive and sustainable development.<sup>209</sup> Therefore, in order to unlock funding and other resources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, UNCTAD supports the Financing for Sustainable Development Office (FSDO).<sup>210</sup> The FSDO coordinates approaches on global financial issues and integrates substantive and organizational assistance to the development finance processes supervised by ECOSOC and the General Assembly.<sup>211</sup> Furthermore, the FSDO ensures that intergovernmental processes on financing for development work in a coherent and consensus-driven

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<sup>199</sup> United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs. *Summary of Progress Report of the Global Pilot Programme on STI for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2020.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*. 2012; United Nations, General Assembly. *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*. 2013; United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *High-Level Political Forum*.

<sup>204</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*. 2013; United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs, *High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2016 - Ensuring that no one is left behind*, 2016; United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *High-Level Political Forum*.

<sup>205</sup> High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Secretariat Background Note. *Mobilizing science, technology, and innovation and strengthening the science-policy-society interface*. 2021.

<sup>206</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*. 2021.

<sup>207</sup> High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. *Mobilizing science, technology, and innovation and strengthening the science-policy-society interface*. 2021; United Nations, General Assembly. *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*. 2013.

<sup>208</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *About UNCTAD*. 2023.

<sup>209</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Green industrial policies key for developing countries to adapt to climate change*. 2021.

<sup>210</sup> United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs. *About Financing for Sustainable Development Office*. n.d.; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *About UNCTAD*. 2023.

<sup>211</sup> United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs. *About Financing for Sustainable Development Office*.

manner, including the work of the Financing for Development Forum, the Development Cooperation Forum, and the relevant subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC.<sup>212</sup> The FSDO also serves as the coordinator and substantive editor of the annual *Financing for Sustainable Development Report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development*.<sup>213</sup> This report advises the intergovernmental follow-up process and reports annually on progress in implementing the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and other financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.<sup>214</sup>

General Assembly resolution 67/290 (2013) identifies private philanthropic organizations, educational and higher education institutions, and other stakeholders working in areas related to sustainable development and STI as relevant actors, including the International Science Council (ISC), World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO), and the Trade Union Development Cooperation Network (TUDCN).<sup>215</sup> These groups are usually referred to as Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS), and are invited to be actively involved in the national implementation of the SDGs through partnerships with other sectors, as well as projects, initiatives, knowledge sharing, and monitoring.<sup>216</sup>

### ***The Impact of Frontier Technologies on Sustainable Development***

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has stated that the world is witnessing an unprecedented surge in technological advancements that are rapidly changing how people live and work in an increasingly interconnected digital era.<sup>217</sup> WIPO emphasizes that the convergence and emergence of frontier technologies is at the core of what is referred to as the Fourth Industrial Revolution.<sup>218</sup> According to the OECD and UNCTAD's *Technology and Innovation Report 2021*, frontier technologies have the potential to fundamentally transform various industries and sectors, provide much-needed solutions to global challenges, substitute for current practices, and drive sustainable development.<sup>219</sup> These new technologies include Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), physical technologies, autonomous systems, 3D-printing, and biological technologies such as genetic engineering or brain-computer interfaces.<sup>220</sup>

As UNCTAD's *Technology and Innovation Report 2021* underlined, the development and adoption of frontier technologies and its readiness in all states are critical for achieving sustainable development goals and addressing global challenges.<sup>221</sup> UN DESA's World Economic and Social Survey 2018 *Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development* noted that "new renewable energy technologies and efficient energy storage systems are already enhancing environmental sustainability within certain regions."<sup>222</sup> In addition, frontier technologies can help optimize resource consumption, enhance disaster response

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform. *Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS)*; United Nations, General Assembly. *Format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (A/RES/67/290)*. 2013.

<sup>216</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Knowledge Platform. *Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS)*; STI Forum Special Event of the Science Technological Community Major Group (STC MG) and Co- Organized by the International Science Council (ISC) and the World Federation of Engineering Organizations (WFEO). *Science Technology, Innovation, and Engineering Solutions for the SDGs: Theory, Practice, and Application*. 2023.

<sup>217</sup> World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). *Intellectual Property and Frontier Technologies*.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. *Science, Technology and Industry Scoreboard*. 2017.; United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*. 2021.

<sup>220</sup> World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). *Intellectual Property and Frontier Technologies*.

<sup>221</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*. 2021.

<sup>222</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *World Economic and Social Survey 2018 - Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*. 2018.

efforts, and create affordable housing in LDCs with 3D printing technology.<sup>223</sup> UNCTAD also recommends the use of frontier technologies in water management, as water is critical to food and agriculture and accounts for 70% of global water demand.<sup>224</sup> For example, solar and hydro-powered irrigation pumps, affordable rainfall storage systems, specialized greenhouses, 5G technology, and other technologies can help farmers to reduce water loss and to secure consistent and safe water access.<sup>225</sup>

However, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) points out in its 2020 report *Frontier technologies to protect the environment and tackle climate change* that frontier technologies need to be sustainably managed; otherwise, they may “bring unintended consequences to the detriment of the environment and societies”.<sup>226</sup> The ITU emphasizes that frontier technologies, if utilized and managed properly, can have an immediate and significant impact in accelerating global sustainable development.<sup>227</sup> One issue highlighted within the UNFCCC was that Member States need to ensure that autonomous systems are free from bias and discrimination and that they take into account the interests of the most vulnerable.<sup>228</sup> Additionally, the UNCTAD *Technology and Innovation Report* (2021) highlights that only a few countries are currently developing cutting-edge technologies, leading to inequalities in accessibility.<sup>229</sup> According to the AU, LDCs especially struggle with the rapid challenges and developments in STI because of economically and structurally challenging conditions that hinder their progress in eliminating poverty and achieving sustainable development.<sup>230</sup> Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are confronted with similar trends.<sup>231</sup>

The *World Economic and Social Survey* (2018) highlights that since the technological differences between and within countries are still considerable, it may be that only some sectors and countries will prosper and others will experience only small or even negative developments.<sup>232</sup> Therefore, the report recommends that policymakers assess capabilities to equitably use, adopt, and adapt these technologies.<sup>233</sup> The report also suggests that Member States’ policies need to prioritize the development and deployment of frontier technologies to underserved and marginalized communities.<sup>234</sup> Furthermore, the World Economic Forum Report *Unlocking Technology for the Global Goals* (2020) proposes public-private partnerships to create systematic change and address systemic issues such as unequal access to education, poverty, and discrimination that arise with the development and usage of frontier technologies.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> United Nations, Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries. *LDC Insight #2: Climate resilience in the LDCs: The benefits of rammed earth technology for sustainable housing*. 2022.

<sup>224</sup> United Nations Conference for Trade and Development. *The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation in Ensuring Food Security by 2030*. 2017.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> International Telecommunication Union. *Frontier Technologies to Protect the Environment and Tackle Climate Change*. 2020.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*. 2021.

<sup>230</sup> African Union. *“On the Wings of Innovation” Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa*. 2014.

<sup>231</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *World Economic and Social Survey 2018 - Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*. 2018.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*. 2021.

<sup>234</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *World Economic and Social Survey 2018 - Frontier Technologies for Sustainable Development*. 2018.

<sup>235</sup> World Economic Forum. *World Economic Forum Report «Unlocking Technology for the Global Goals - As part of Frontier 2030: Fourth Industrial Revolution for Global Goals Platform»*. 2020.

## ***Closing the Gender Gap in Access to Science, Technology, and Innovation for Sustainable Development***

As UNCTAD expressed, STI can only meaningfully contribute to the achievement of sustainable development if it is equally accessible for people of all genders.<sup>236</sup> This reflects the overall objective of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind, demanding an achievement of sustainable development which includes achieving gender equality.<sup>237</sup> According to the AU Development Agency, development connected to STI can only be achieved when girls and women are as educated and represented as boys and men in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields and are working in leadership positions in the connected areas of STI.<sup>238</sup> However, based on World Economic Forum data, women are globally significantly unrepresented in STEM fields.<sup>239</sup> In the field of AI, only 22% of employees worldwide are women, accounting for regional differences.<sup>240</sup> Women represented less than 30% of the world's STEM researchers in 2016.<sup>241</sup> Moreover, women are more likely to lack access to the internet, especially in LDCs, where only 19% of women had access to the internet in 2022.<sup>242</sup>

To address the gender gap, the IATT Working Group on “Gender and Science, Technology, and Innovation” started their work in 2018 focused on “collaboration among the UN, its agencies, funds and programs on issues pertaining to STI and gender”.<sup>243</sup> The group aims to raise awareness among Member States and contribute to information sharing and capacity building mechanisms in order to support women and girls’ participation in STI.<sup>244</sup> Additionally, the UNESCO STEM and Gender Advancement (SAGA) Project, which focuses on SDGs 5 (gender equality), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure) and 17 (partnerships for the goals), tries to help Member States reduce gender inequality in education and research within STEM fields.<sup>245</sup> As part of this project, UNESCO supports Member States in collecting data on women in STI, evaluating the situation of women and girls related to STI, and revealing gender gaps in national policies with the aim of improving them.<sup>246</sup>

The IATT Working Group on Gender and STI highlighted that it is of utmost importance to include women and girls equally in the field of STI in order to fully utilize the entire potential of the population and thereby find solutions to current problems.<sup>247</sup> The need to ensure women’s equal access to STI and the importance of contributing to women’s empowerment in the field of STI was also included as a key point in General Assembly resolution 74/229 (2019).<sup>248</sup> In its report on the sixty-first session, the Commission on the Status of Women states that the general requirement for women’s empowerment and their equal treatment can be found in Article 3 of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination*

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<sup>236</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Gender perspectives in science, technology and innovation*. 2011.

<sup>237</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (A/RES/34/180)*. 1981.; United Nations Sustainable Development Group. *Leave no one behind*.

<sup>238</sup> African Union Development Agency. *Promoting The Participation Of African Women And Girls In STI-Driven Socio-Economic Development*. 2021.

<sup>239</sup> World Economic Forum. *The gender gap in science and technology, in numbers*. 2023.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics (UIS). *Women in Science (FS/2019/SCI/55)*. 2019.

<sup>242</sup> International Telecommunication Union. *Bridging the gender divide*. 2022.

<sup>243</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *Gender and STI - IATT work stream 8: Gender and Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)*. 2021.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *STEM and Gender Advancement (SAGA)*.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *UN Interagency Task Team on STI for the SDGs - IATT work stream 8: Gender and Science, Technology and Innovation*. 2018.

<sup>248</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development (A/RES/74/229)*. 2020.

*against Women* (1979), which also obligates Member States to ensure the full development and advancement of women, in all fields.<sup>249</sup>

According to UN Women, further national education efforts, adequate financial resources, capacity building, and technology transfer are essential to achieve the agreements made on women's participation in STI and STEM fields.<sup>250</sup> The need to facilitate women's and girls' access to STEM education and training is also emphasized in General Assembly resolution 74/229 (2019).<sup>251</sup> ECOSOC states that education will help women learn basic digital literacy and acquire advanced technical knowledge, which will lead to the elimination of gender gaps.<sup>252</sup> Additionally, equal access to digital technologies and the elimination of stereotypes and biases that prevent women from working in STEM fields are also of utmost importance.<sup>253</sup> To achieve equal participation of women in STI, General Assembly resolution 74/229 (2019) recommends including a gender perspective in legislation, policies, and programs.<sup>254</sup> The STI Forum underscores that STIs can only be fully leveraged for sustainable development if Member States succeed in eliminating gender gaps in the full cycle of education, employment, entrepreneurship, and leadership.<sup>255</sup>

### **Conclusion**

To achieve the 2030 Agenda, the General Assembly and the international community must continue to raise awareness and build capacity to use STIs to support those who are furthest behind and most marginalized.<sup>256</sup> Similarly, better linkage between STIs and SDGs needs to be established in implementation.<sup>257</sup> The TFM facilitates coordination within the UN system on STI-related matters for sustainable development and strengthens capacity-building initiatives by promoting improved efficiency among all stakeholders.<sup>258</sup> Furthermore, several bodies within the international community propose STI roadmaps as a means to strengthen capacity building in STI for sustainable development.<sup>259</sup> The use of frontier technologies can accelerate achieving the SDGs in almost any field, if properly deployed and established.<sup>260</sup> Likewise, eliminating gender gaps is critical to promoting sustainable development.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> United Nations Women. *E/2017/27*. 2017.

<sup>250</sup> Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women. *Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work*. 2017.

<sup>251</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development (A/RES/74/229)*. 2020.

<sup>252</sup> Economic and Social Council, Commission on the Status of Women, *Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work*. 2017

<sup>253</sup> United Nations Women. UN Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the role of technology and innovation, and education in the digital age in accelerating gender equality. Press release. 2023; United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization. *Gender Equality in Science, Technology and Innovation: Towards an Inclusive STI Ecosystem*. 2021.

<sup>254</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development (A/RES/74/229)*. 2020.

<sup>255</sup> United Nations Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. *Thematic Session 4: Breaking Down Barriers – closing the gender gap in science and technology*. 2023.

<sup>256</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*. 2015.

<sup>257</sup> United Nations, High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Secretariat Background Note. *Mobilizing science, technology, and innovation and strengthening the science-policy-society interface*. 2021.

<sup>258</sup> United Nations, General Assembly. *Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) (A/RES/69/313)*. 2015.

<sup>259</sup> United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. *UN STI Forum 2021 High-Level Side Event on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps - Call for Action: Scaling up the Global Pilot Programme on STI for the SDGs roadmaps*. 2021.

<sup>260</sup> International Telecommunication Union. *Frontier Technologies to Protect the Environment and Tackle Climate Change*. 2020.

<sup>261</sup> United Nations Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable



## Further Research

How can the Key Mechanisms on STI for sustainable development drive progress under the 2030 Agenda? How can Member States enhance international cooperation on STI to better address sustainable development? How can STI be mobilized to reduce inequalities and improve the lives of those who are furthest behind? How can LDCs and SIDS benefit directly from the advantages of frontier technologies for sustainable development, and what challenges might arise? What steps can governments and stakeholders take to address the various factors that contribute to the gender gap in STI, such as access, affordability, skills, and relevance?

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*This work is the final document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda contains a new international framework for financing for development as well as a comprehensive set of actions, including more than 100 concrete policy measures to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. In the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Member States committed to adopt science, technology and innovation strategies as integral elements of national sustainable development strategies. This section promotes the diffusion of innovation, international support to drive capacity development, and the promotion of the exchange of knowledge amid interested parties. This document is notably relevant for delegates as it is the implementation plan for the SDGs in STI.*

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU). *Frontier technologies to protect the environment and tackle climate change*. 2020. Retrieved 01 July 2023 from: <https://www.itu.int/en/publications/Documents/tsb/2020-Frontier-Technologies-to-Protect-the-Environment-and-Tackle-Climate-Change/index.html>

*This report highlights the potential of frontier technologies for sustainable development, particularly in accelerating efforts to achieve SDG 13 (climate action). It explores the potential of frontier technologies to support climate change assessment, mitigation, and adaptation. It also identifies which UN bodies have addressed the field of frontier technologies. The report highlights eight technologies that offer innovative solutions to address the needs of the world's population while also addressing some of the needs of our planet. The findings and conclusions of this report will provide valuable ideas for further research into the success of frontier technologies in addressing climate change. Overall, this report provides delegates with a better understanding of the intricacies of developing and using pioneering technologies to achieve sustainable development.*

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. *World Economic and Social Survey 2018 - "Frontier technologies for sustainable development"*. 2018. Retrieved 9 June 2023 from: [https://digitallibrary.in.one.un.org/TempPdfFiles/2260\\_1.pdf](https://digitallibrary.in.one.un.org/TempPdfFiles/2260_1.pdf)

*This report addresses the immense potential of advanced technologies for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This document is particularly relevant as it combines recommendations from the scientific community and UN entities on leveraging frontier technology for the SDGs. The report deepens the understanding of the impact of frontier technologies and clearly shows current gaps in the implementation of STI measures. Furthermore, it makes a case for collective action to set standards and ethical boundaries for the world's shared digital future. This document gives delegates a comprehensive*

*overview about the application and use of frontier technologies, which could be relevant for position papers and working papers at the conference.*

United Nations Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology, and Innovation for the SDGs (IATT) Sub-Working Group on STI Roadmaps. *Guidebook for the preparation of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for SDGs Roadmaps*. 2020. Retrieved 8 June 2023 from: [https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26001Guidebook\\_STI\\_for\\_SDG\\_Roadmaps\\_First\\_Edition\\_clean0323.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/26001Guidebook_STI_for_SDG_Roadmaps_First_Edition_clean0323.pdf)

*This document emerged from the 2017 STI Forum, which highlighted the need for STI roadmaps and action plans at the regional, national and global levels, which also includes measures for tracking progress. It shows how roadmaps work as a policy tool to harness STI as a means to achieve sustainable development. Moreover, this document explains how roadmaps are designed, implemented, monitored, and adjusted at global and national SDG agendas. This document provides delegates with an overview of the advantages and developments of STI roadmaps and may provide delegates with ideas for working papers at conference.*

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*This website is an ideal starting point for understanding IATT workstream 8: Gender and Science and serves as an overview on its founding, progress, and upcoming programs of work. It is a great source for information on the topic of Gender and Science and provides links to background documents, reports, and initiatives. Delegates can use the website and its documents as a starting point to familiarize themselves with the work and current status of gender and STI.*

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