First and Second Reading of the zero draft of the Pact for the Future – Chapter 3 on Science, Technology and Innovation and Digital Cooperation

ABOUT: Following informal consultations and written inputs from Member States (MS) and stakeholders, the co-facilitators of the Summit of the Future released the zero draft of the Pact for the Future in January 2024. Subsequently, there was a chapter-by-chapter First Reading in early February, followed by a paragraph-by-paragraph Second Reading from February to early April. This process ended with the release of a compilation text in early April 2024, which is primary source material of this ICH bulletin. This bulletin will focus on Chapter 3 of the Pact for the Future – Science, Technology and Innovation and Digital Cooperation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Member States collectively stressed on utilizing technology and science to address global challenges and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, emphasizing an inclusive, and human rights-based approach. Some Member States highlighted the significance of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and in addressing development issues. Furthermore, Member States urged partnerships, technology transfer, and balanced geographical representation in scientific advisory boards. They advocated for responsible business conduct, sustainable supply chains, and flexible intellectual property rights. Commitments were made to manage technological risks, bridge digital divides, and empower vulnerable groups. Emphasis was placed on capacity building, digital literacy, and enhancing connectivity. Member states prioritized South-South cooperation, transparency in norm-setting, evidence-based policymaking, and addressing specific challenges like gender-based violence and healthcare accessibility. They also invited all countries to integrate modern science and technology with local and indigenous knowledge and innovation. Additionally, they highlighted the importance of global support for STEM education and human rights-based approaches in digital cooperation.

HEADLINES:

- Member States recognized the potential of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes and in tackling development challenges and voiced their support for collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency to propel advancements in new nuclear technologies.
- MS emphasized the use of technology to promote inclusive development and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while also recognizing the transformative impact of science and technology in addressing global challenges.
- Several Member States urged for strengthening partnerships, sharing best practices, and promoting research and technology transfer, particularly to developing nations.
- Member States welcome the establishment of the Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board and the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology, emphasizing the importance of balanced representation across geography, gender, and developing countries.
- Member States advocated for responsible business practices, compliance with human rights principles, sustainable supply chains, and flexible intellectual property rights to support sustainable development efforts and tackle global crises.
- Some Member States expressed their commitment to mitigating risks associated to new technologies to ensure societal and environmental advantages.

- Member States affirmed their commitments to narrowing digital disparities and advocating for digital inclusion, especially for vulnerable groups like women, youth, the elderly, individuals with disabilities, and rural communities.
- MS support capacity building, digital literacy, and access to technologies to empower individuals and communities, with a focus on utilizing digital technologies to expedite progress towards the SDGs and improve connectivity.
- Member States emphasizes the significance of enhancing South-South and triangular cooperation in science, technology, and innovation. They concentrate on key areas such as food security, pandemic prevention, vaccines, and open-source AI, while also stepping up support for research institutions in developing countries.
- Member States pledge to promote transparency, openness, and inclusivity in setting norms for new technologies. Some recognizes the significance of adapting technology to local requirements, respecting traditional knowledge, and ensuring inclusivity in digital cooperation.
- Member States advocated for evidence-based policymaking, enhancing the utilization of science and scientific evidence, and investing in high-quality data. They also endorse initiatives like the Global Sustainable Development Report and the Global Pilot Program on Science, Technology, and Innovation for SDGs Road Maps.
- Some Member States stressed the significance of responsible research that upholds human rights and ethical principles. They underscored the importance of researcher autonomy, freedom, and safety to ensure accuracy and objectivity in scientific results.
- The discussion also focused on addressing specific challenges such as gender-based violence, healthcare accessibility, and sustainable agriculture through technology and innovation.
- Several Member States urged for global support to provide STEM education and research opportunities, particularly for youth and women in developing countries. They stressed the importance of improving working conditions to prevent brain drain and adapting to technological advancements through upskilling programs.
- There was a strong emphasis on advocating for human rights-based approaches in digital cooperation, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for everyone. Additionally, there were commitments to safeguarding human rights both online and offline, addressing gender disparities, and empowering marginalized communities.
- Member states proposed a key commitment by recognizing the universal importance of science in fostering international cooperation, sustainable development, and global peace.

METHODOLOGY:

The next section will have the text as in the zero draft at the start of every operational paragraph (*italicized*) of the third chapter of the Pact for the Future, titled "Science, Technology, and Innovation, and Digital Cooperation". Following this there will be a summary of the comments, feedback and observations provided by member states during the first and second reading of the zero draft, which occurred at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from February to the first week of April 2024. Present summary is based on a thematic analysis, where similar points raised by member states were grouped into key themes by each operational paragraph (non-italicized).

RESOURCES:

1. [Zero draft of the Pact for the Future](#)
2. [Compilation text (as of 3 April 2024)](#)
3. [Letter from the co-facilitators – 26 January](#)