

## High Level Political Forum 2022

### *Panel Discussion*

#### **“Mobilizing and sharing science, technology and innovation for an SDG driven recovery”**

#### INDIA STATEMENT

by

**By Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Science & Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh  
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Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentleman,

Namaste

It is my pleasure to virtually participate at this session of the UN High Level Political Forum today to discuss the potential of science, technology and innovation the STI in responding to crises and realizing the Sustainable Development Goals the SDGs. STI as all of us know is a powerful enabler and in a country like India under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi it has emerged a strong tool in the recent years, which needs to be leveraged to accelerate progress for sustainable development and for a resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. As all of us know Technology-driven creative business models and service delivery have a vast potential to fast-track the achievement of SDGs in a cost-effective, transparent and inclusive manner. However we need to facilitate access to technology for developing countries to tackle challenges related to sustainable development and I said India under Prime Minister Modi has taken a lead in this direction.

3. In the last two years, ladies and Gentleman, we have seen a global effort to overcome the challenges caused by the pandemic and India has emerged as a member of leading international scientific coalitions in the area of vaccine research. Our scientific community, along with the support of a robust pharmaceutical industry, has been successful in developing and promoting safe, effective, and affordable vaccines, including the world's first DNA based vaccine.

4. We are working actively with GAVI, WHO and ACT Accelerator. India has strongly advocated for the principle of equity in the WHO and had also proposed, along with South Africa, a TRIPS waiver at the WTO for COVID vaccines, diagnostics, and the medicines; with the aim of ensuring accessibility and affordability of vaccines for all. We acknowledge

that the outcome was watered down from what we asked for in our proposal. While we in India have gone along with the consensus, we continue to call on members to redouble efforts to now start work on diagnostics and therapeutics.

5. The enormous power of digital and information technology has been a key component of global response to the **Covid pandemic**. Utilizing our strength in the digital process, the Government of India headed by Prime Minister Modi decided to share with the world, the India-developed Co-WIN App, to provide digital support to better organize the vaccination drives.

6. A key pillar of India's current economic recovery is **technology-led growth**. Today, India has one of the best eco-systems in the world for innovation, which is reflected in the growing number of Indian **start-ups**. There are more than 100 unicorns in over 70,000 start-ups in India, and their number continues to grow.

7. Ladies and Gentlemen, The value of Indian **digital economy** will reach 1 trillion dollars by the year 2025 and the growth of the digital sector also encouraged the participation of women in the workforce. There are approximately 36 % women out of 4.4 million professionals working in our IT sector. The maximum benefit from Technology-based **financial inclusion** has also gone to the women in the rural areas. Today, even people in far-flung villages of India are easily doing transactions ranging from a few cents to thousands of dollars using India-developed **digital transaction platforms** such as UPI or Unified Payment Interface. India's RuPay payment network has also been revamped with enhanced global reach that supports electronic payments at all banks as well as financial institutions in India

8. We have made innovation-friendly policies which have been promoted by Prime Minister Modi in different areas including space, blue economy, green hydrogen, clean technology, drones, geo-spatial systems, artificial intelligence, semi-conductors, genomics, pharmaceuticals, 5G etc. **Space-tech** has a big role in planning and developing coastal areas, agriculture sector and tele-education, among others. We are expanding accessibility and affordability in **healthcare** through telemedicine, digital health ID and drone technology. India's **bio-economy** has grown eight times in less than a decade from \$10 billion to \$80 billion; and is not too far from reaching the league of top 10 countries in biotech's global ecosystem. Through bio-fertilizers and bio-fortified seeds, biotech is being utilized in India to reduce the impact of climate change on agriculture and overcoming malnutrition; Bio-fuels are helpful in improving the energy sector.

9. Science, Technology and Innovation ladies and gentleman before I conclude I would say is a powerful medium to empower the citizens and advance the achievements of SDGs. We believe that strengthened cooperation in this field with a spirit of collaboration is a key to accelerate our collective response to COVID-19 and also towards sustain-

able development in the future and I therefor end by wishing you all constructive deliberations ahead on the opportunities for mobilizing STI and strengthening the science-policy-society interface.

thank you

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and Thank you once again

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