

STI Forum – New York

Brief Report

This report includes a summary of the Science, Technology, and Innovation Forum held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City. (<https://sdgs.un.org/tfm/STIForum2023>). The forum lasted for two days, the 3rd and 4th of May, I participated in my capacity as Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Science and Technology of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

On the 2nd of May, I attended a meeting in the IPU headquarters in New York, with the attendance of:

- **Ms. Paddy Torsney:** Permanent Observer to the United Nations from the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Director of the New York Office.
- **Mr. Alessandro Muter,** Advisor for Economic and Social Affairs at the Inter-Parliamentary Union.
- **Mr. Wong Chen:** Member of the Malaysian Parliament and member of the Working Group
- Dr. Sahar Attia: Vice President of the Working Group

During the meeting, Mr Chen and I explained the activities and role of the working group and we all discussed the importance of the STWG presence in the forum. The Inter-Parliamentary Union participates in this forum to enhance the role of parliamentarians in the future activities of the United Nations.

1- Attendees of the Forum:

- Representatives of missions in the United Nations from different countries, and Counselor Shereen Al-Saeed attended from the Egyptian Mission in New York.
- Science and Technology Working Group in the Inter-Parliamentary Union, 3 members from Egypt, Malaysia , and Ecuador.
- A few foreign ministers (for example, the Minister of Higher Education from South Africa – the Minister of Education and Science from Tajikistan – the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research from the Sultanate of Oman - International Cooperation from Panama
- Representatives of many international organizations and bodies (affiliated and not affiliated) with the United Nations.

2- Themes of discussion in the forum: (please refer to the detailed program on the website)

- The sustainable development Goals 2030, which have stalled as a result of international crises, and the assertion that they will not progress without harnessing science and technology to achieve them, this confirms the need for governments to cooperate with scientists and all stakeholders in cities.
- Discussing areas in which science serves the decision-making process: such as energy, vaccine production, and electronic incubators... They are also considered areas that attract investment.
- Digital identity for all countries.
- How parliaments can exploit science and technology for decision-making, and the role of scientific bodies and institutions in the decision-making process based on scientific evidence.

- The role of international cooperation in ensuring that all developing and developed countries benefit alike from the available opportunities and ensuring the privacy, safety, and security of data and information, as the International Telecommunication Union emphasized the other side of technological progress and double standards in terms of security threats as a result of digitization and artificial intelligence.
- Immigration and the problems of labor-exporting countries - the need to think about the economics of migration.
- Mechanisms for evaluating risks and crises that require scientific skills.
- The role of the private sector in supporting science and technology.
- Road plans and innovative solutions for science and technology, Japan presented its plan in this regard.

On the second day, the Global Report on Sustainable Development for the year 2023 was presented , <https://sdgs.un.org/gsdr/gsdr2023>

The report indicated that the countries of the world are far from the right path to achieving sustainable development goals due to the multiplicity of crises. For example, after improving the poverty rate in 2019, there was a setback and a continuation of the deterioration, which calls for major interventions and measures such as : Setting frameworks for transformation through national action plans, debt restructuring, capacity building,...etc

It was noted that the African Alliance for Technology was launched one day prior to the forum and chaired by Morocco

3- Interventions from the Egyptian side:

- Dr. Sahar Attia's intervention included the group's activities, coordination with the IPU committees, the importance of science and scientists for the advancement of countries, especially if they are linked to the decision-making process, and the need to find a balance between political decisions and scientific evidence to achieve scientific diplomacy and multilateral governance so that international relations serve the local level. The Initiative of the IPU along with CERN in creating the Science for Peace Schools that took place in Geneva is a new experience to engage scientists and Parliamentarians highlighting the necessity of the dialogue Science/Peace.
- - Counsellor Sherine's intervention on the importance of promoting improved communications and providing access to electronic networks for all.

4- The most important recommendations drawn from the forum:

- Internet connection must be considered as **a human right**. There are about 2.9 billion people who are not connected to the Internet, and developed countries must contribute to achieving equality between people.
- Governments cannot work alone to achieve sustainable development; all parties, especially scientists, must come together.

- The **role of women** in the science and technology system is still limited (out of 500 million people working in programming and technology, only 100 million of them are women). Women should be encouraged to enter this field to achieve integration.
- International cooperation does not take place in accordance with the agreements (the Paris Agreement did not commit the developed countries to the financing agreed upon in the field of climate change) and the developed countries must be obliged to contribute to financing the technological progress of the developing countries of the South to ensure a digital future for all, as there is a digital divide. Especially since the developed countries use the security data of the developing countries to build on them technological programs and tools, the countries have the right to obtain the authority and the ability to use them.
- The successive international migration due to wars will cause new problems and will impede the achievement of sustainable development goals, and the repercussions resulting from this migration must be considered. Conditions of countries will not improve without international commitments.
- Intelligence has affected geopolitical relations, and this requires ensuring the rights of individuals and the confidentiality of their data.
- Artificial intelligence is a technological future, and in order for the Egyptian state to keep pace with what is happening globally, attention must be paid to building capacities in this field and encouraging scientific research and grants in this regard.
- Investment in education, research and technological development should be encouraged.
- The measure of progress is not only the domestic product, but more importantly the measure of cultural values. Innovation must promote behavioral change.
- Paying attention to the infrastructure to serve the digital transformation and renewable energy.

It is foreseen that the outcome of the forum will be presented in the UN general assembly