

**Delegates of the 2019 African Technology Policy Studies Network
Annual Conference and Silver Jubilee, Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya, 30 – 31 October 2019**

Preamble:

The African Technology Policy Studies Network (ATPS) convened a delegation of ministers, academia, private sector and civil society to deliberate on the theme “Using Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) as a means for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa”. Delegates were drawn from over 40 countries in Africa and beyond.

The delegates to the conference which was held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Nairobi recognized that:

- At the continental, regional, national and institutional levels, there is a strong recognition of the role of STI in Africa’s development trajectory. This is evident in the multiple declarations right from 1960 through the 80s until now
- There is a strong desire on the continent to build a modern economy that is driven by STI as evidenced in the development of continental STI strategy, STISA 2024, Regional and National STI policies among others
- The integral and instrumental role of STI in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- The need for Africa to be at the cutting edge of technology and innovation to leapfrog Africa’s industrialisation, stability, and technological revolution
- STI is essential in the provision of vital data and information that will drive policy and decision-making in Africa
- We have witnessed some incremental changes in development and application of STI in Africa
- To solve critical problems in our society today, capacity will be critical for STI development to be able to explore opportunities in technological advancements for societal change and decision-making
- There is need to figure out how STI will have a real impact on our society, in terms of:
 - Transforming our financial systems to improve transparency and accountability
 - Positively influencing the real economy to improve societal welfare
 - Innovative ways of providing financial sustainability for STI in Africa
 - The double-edge character of technology and innovation in modern society
- The role that ATPS play in providing platforms for collaborative and innovative policy research that support African governments and STI institutions to build necessary knowledge conditions and infrastructures, policies and incentives, and capabilities for STI knowledge generation, brokerage, circulation, and socialization to ensure effective valorisation and commercialization of scientific and indigenous knowledge into new technologies and innovations for sustainable development on the continent is key.

The delegates further observed that:

- Science, Technology and Innovation remain the fundamental driver and enabler to achieve the aspirations and goals of the African Union’s Agenda 2063.
- Africa has made significant effort towards developing capacity to deliver STI driven development agenda. However, a change of mindset is key to transformation. With the relative number of human resources and facilities that are available, Africa can achieve far more if we set our minds to work and achieve greater heights in STI.

- Through a transdisciplinary approach, STI knowledge must target the specific problems and needs of the society. A platform for experience sharing, learning, diffusion of research and technology transfer is required
- Investment in research and development (R&D) is critical but also in innovation which normally occurs outside the realms of R&D
- It is time for African policymakers, researchers, and practitioners to decolonize our minds to work within the confines of our limitations, to turn problems into strategic resources and be able to generate financial resources to drive STI development
- Africa's development challenges are daunting – food and nutrition, job creation, healthcare and wellbeing, industrialization and environmental sustainability – but these challenges must be seen as opportunities that can motivate the continent to develop and apply STI.
- The transition towards technology savvy/ digital economy is already happening and this will require vigorous STI policy research and advocacy
- Investment in regional infrastructure and STI is necessary to bridge the intra-Africa trade gaps among African countries
- We envision a strong commitment of our development partners such as African Export and Import Bank (AFREXIMBANK), International Development Research Center (IDRC), African Development Bank (AFDB) and SWISS Development Cooperation to support the ATPS in driving the STI development agenda in Africa.

The delegates therefore resolved that:

- The continuous development of the capacity of individuals and institutions toward the generation of STI knowledge that is tailored to the development needs of Africans is critical to achieving our goals and aspirations. The STI priorities and the emerging technologies require the development of capacity at individual, institutional and systemic levels.
- The journey towards the mastery of STI will be driven by the private sector and not by government. However, the governments in Africa must create the enabling environments for the private sector actors to thrive.
- The road to STI independence for Africa's industrialisation and socio-economic transformation will succeed not only by addressing capacity, funding or the several other challenges, but by the renewal of the mindset of the entire citizenry (Social Transformation).
- Collaboration and partnerships are key for STI development in Africa. Partnership can be brokered among stakeholders in the public and private sectors within and outside Africa.
- A holistic National Innovation System (NIS) approach to harnessing STI capacity for addressing the development challenges is necessary for Africa's socio-economic transformation is required.

Implementing these policy recommendations is essential to promoting STI independence which is imperative for achieving the SDGs. ATPS should be supported by the development partners to implement these recommendations.

Appreciation:

Delegates finally expressed appreciation to the development partners who have been supporting the good works of ATPS as the premier STI organization on the continent and encouraged them to do more as well as welcomed new partners to support the works of ATPS.