

**Statement by H.E. Rana Tanveer Hussain, Minister for Science and
Technology Pakistan at the 72nd Session of UNESCAP
Bangkok, 15-19 May 2016**

**Ministerial Segment
Agenda Item 8**

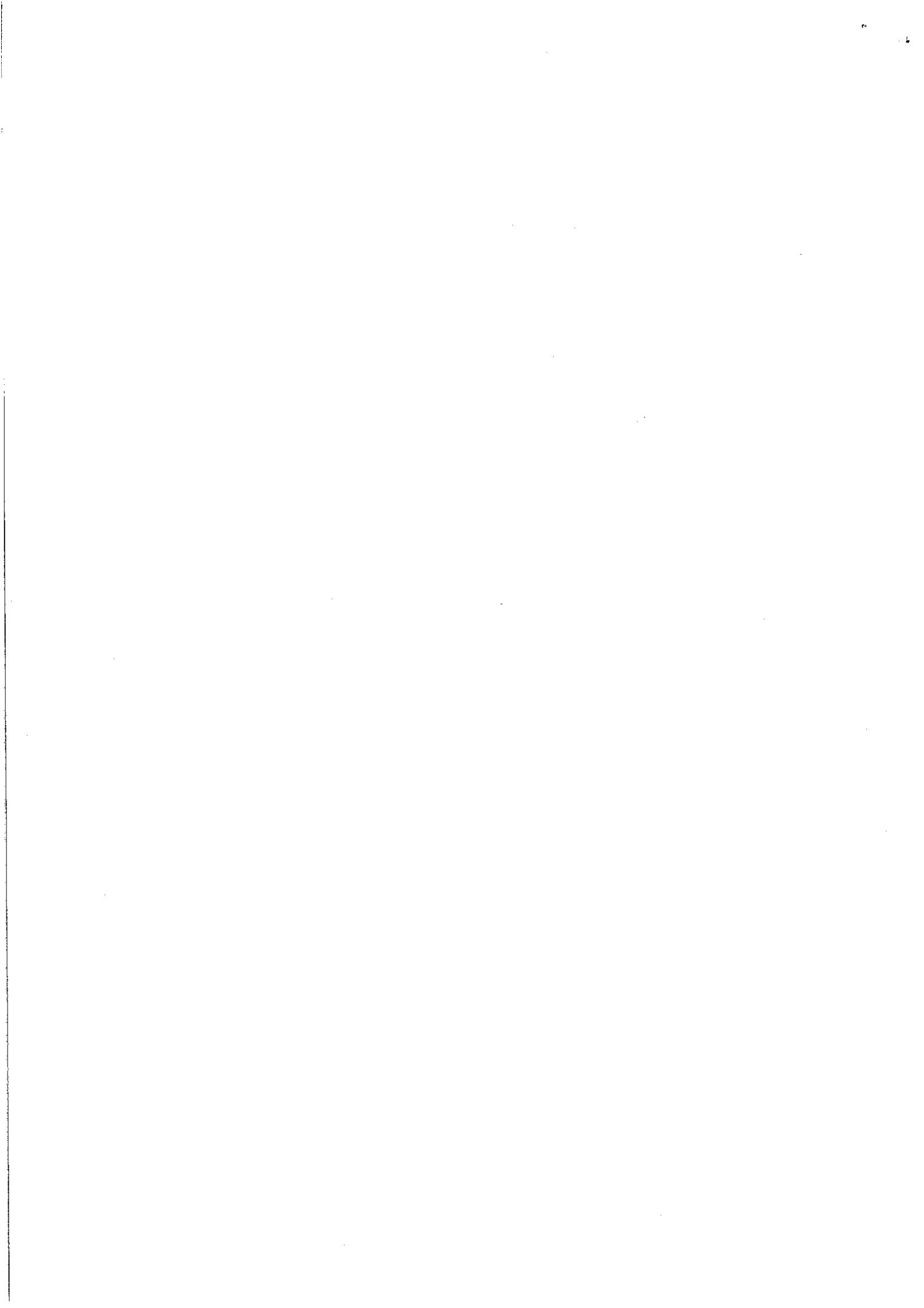
**Mr. Chairman,
Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let me first of all congratulate Mr. Chairman and all participating ministers as Vice Chairs for their successful election to the 72nd session of UNESCAP. I am confident that, under your able stewardship, the session will successfully complete its deliberations. I wish to assure full cooperation and support of my delegation in this regard.

2. I also appreciate the Secretariat for their hard work and preparation of useful documents for the session. I feel privileged to be a part of this august gathering of ministerial meeting and hope to gain a lot by mutual sharing of our experience and learning.

3. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted unanimously in 2015 by all member countries of the United Nations, and launched in January 2016. The new Agenda presents a central vision for sustainable development in all of its three dimensions i.e. economic, social and environmental, and calls to begin efforts to achieve 17 SDGs and 160 targets over the next 15 years.

4. The Commission has rightly foresighted that, business as usual will not be an option if the ambitions of transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are to be met. New and transformative approaches such as using Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) --- identified as mean for implementation--- will play a key role in this regard.



5. Effective alignment and reinforcement of STI, through conducive policies and legal and regulatory frameworks will help attracting investments; develop businesses and creating knowledge societies. The applications of science and technology, in building upon local knowledge, skills and materials, are central in facilitating the socio-economic progress. Bridging the development gap between the technologically advanced and the developing countries, and alleviating poverty can contribute to provide a more equitable and sustainable future. The developing countries ,however, face multiple impediments such as:

- a. Lack of human capital or skilled manpower
- b. Lack of coordination and inappropriate, ineffective policies
- c. Climate challenges and natural disasters
- d. Global economic crisis
- e. Governance and Political instability
- f. Limited STI approach and lack of knowledge economies.
- g. Little financing opportunities

Mr. Chairman,

6. Pakistan attaches high priority to the implementation of 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and SDGs. Pakistan is perhaps the first country to formalize broad political support for the SDGs through adoption of a unanimous resolution in National Assembly of Pakistan on 19 February 2016. At the federal level, an SDGs Monitoring and Coordination Unit, is being established to serve as a National Coordinating entity.

7. The present government's Vision 2025 provides a comprehensive national long term strategy for achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development. By placing the people at its core, the Vision provides a clear synthesis between Pakistan's development needs and the imperative of achieving inclusive growth, and benefiting our society.

8. The Vision builds on seven pillars namely, human and social capital, sustained indigenous and inclusive growth, democratic governance and institutional reform, energy, food and water security, private sector-led growth, knowledge economy and regional connectivity. These Seven



Pillars of the Vision 2025 document are strongly interlinked and each of them finds resonance with one or more of the SDGs.

9. The Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) in Pakistan is the national focal point entrusted with developing STI policies and strategies and coordination at federal and provincial levels including with relevant stakeholders and international partners.

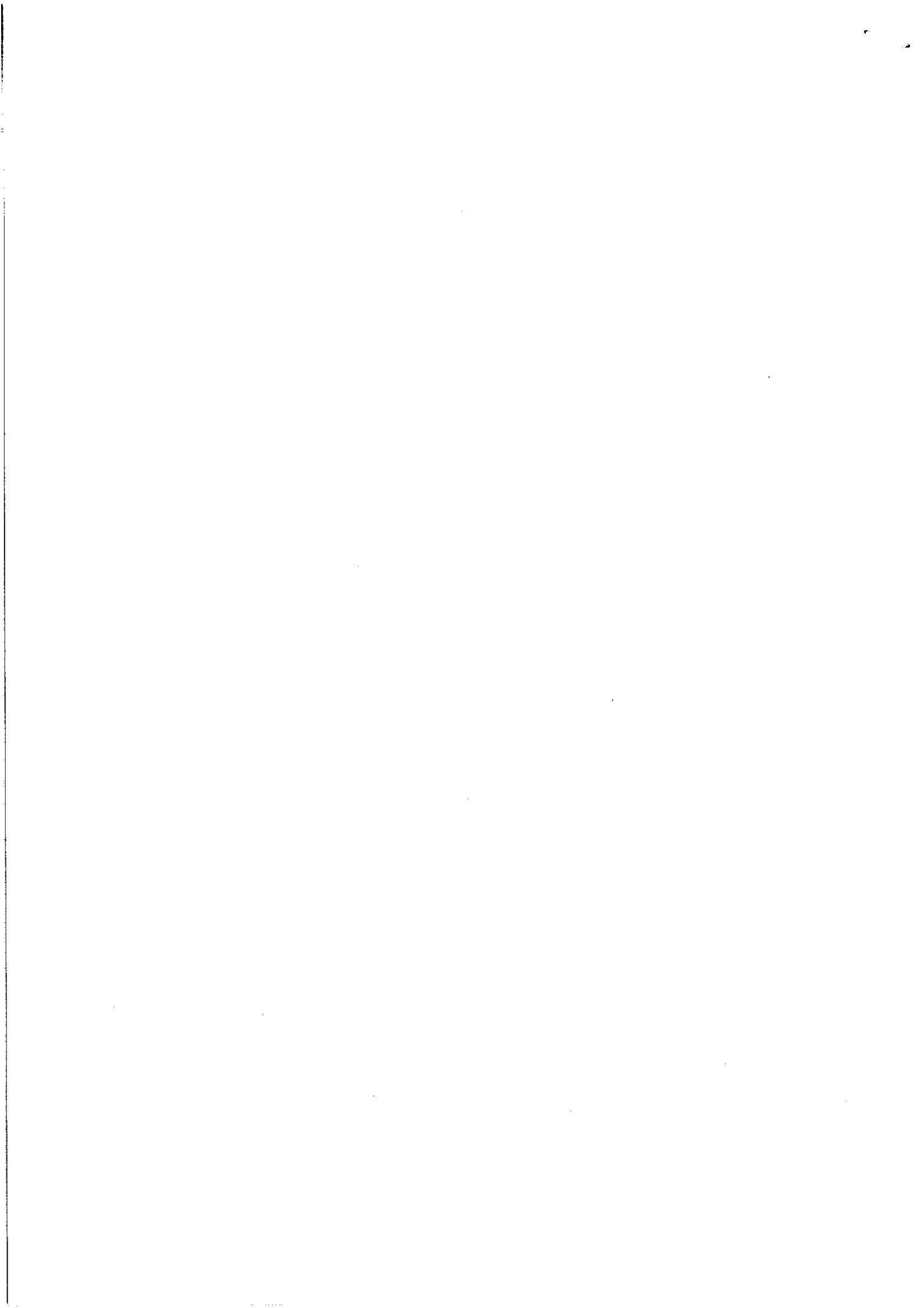
10. A National Research Agenda (2016) has been prepared in-line with the Vision 2025 to align the national R&D and innovation activities with the global SDGs in national context. The National Research Agenda identify 14 priority areas vital for national growth and development prepared in consultation with a large number of stakeholders including scientists, engineers, researchers, industrialists and policy makers.

11. Inclusion of the sustainability perspective in the economic and development thinking has been the overarching consideration. It puts people first and aims to develop human capital, achieve sustained and inclusive growth, focus on governance and institutions, ensure energy, water and food security, modernize transportation infrastructure, enhanced greater regional connectivity, and promote public-private partnerships.

12. In Information and Communication Technologies, Pakistan has been a leading country. The IT industry is regarded as a successful sector of Pakistan economy as it contributed Rs. 126.30 billion to exchequer in 2014. IT investments in Pakistan have also increased has to \$5.1 billion approximately, as the sector is expanding and generating new jobs with emergence of new technologies in ICT.

13. Broadband penetration rate increased from 3% to 15% and IT remittances have grown up to 41% as compared to the previous years. Mobile broadband services are now available across 200 cities in the country.

14. A Prevention of Electronic Crimes (PEC) Bill, is being promulgated to curb cyber and electronic crimes.



15. Through Government's Universal Service Fund efforts are being made to minimize the Information and Communication gap between rural and urban communities.

Mr. Chairman,

16. It's encouraging to note that the Asia Pacific's share of world expenditure on research and development rose from 36 per cent in 2007 to 44 per cent in 2013. It has acquired some STI competence and capabilities; however, these have been thus far harnessed by few countries only.

17. Putting in place action-orientated STI policies aligned to development strategies, creation of an enabling environment for STI, and full integration of the three dimensions into STI policy at regional and national level are imperative to meet SDGs.

18. UNESCAP being the largest UN body serving the Asia-Pacific region and its relevant Committee on STI can therefore, play a meaningful role by providing a platform to member states for knowledge sharing, exchange of best practices, capacity building and helping to devise appropriate policies on STI.

19. Nevertheless, the regional and global cooperation is critical for scientific and technological advancement. Keeping in mind capacities of developing countries, there is a need to move beyond the actions of individual States and move towards global and regional partnerships bound by the principles of openness, inclusivity and collaboration. Such partnerships should involve equal distribution, diffusion and dissemination of STI information, technology transfer and financial liberties.

20. Finally I wish to underscore that by sponsoring resolution on Science , Technology and Innovation , Pakistan sincerely hopes that this will help in promoting the wholesome uplift and transformation of the Asia Pacific region and living standards of its people

I thank you all

