

[IPU Assembly] Utilizing Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for a More Peaceful and Sustainable Future (2)

Mr. President and delegations from all over the world,
My name is Lee Inyoung, and I'm head of the delegation from the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea.

Before I deliver my remarks, I wish to say that I am honored and proud to break the news, perhaps for the first time for you, that a South Korean author, Han Kang, has won the Nobel Prize in Literature. This win marks an important milestone in my nation being able to share the depth and breadth of Korean literature, and the message of peace with the rest of the world. These are two of her books, *There Comes a Boy* and *We Do Not Part*.

But back to business. First of all, I wish to thank deeply IPU President Tulia Ackson and IPU Secretary-General Martin Chungong, and other relevant parties for your efforts in preparing for this assembly to be a success.

Currently, our society is undergoing the Fourth Industrial Revolution, centered on artificial intelligence and big data, as the development of science and technology accelerates. These changes are redefining the foundation of our lives in completely new ways.

Digital transformation applies not only to finance and the

economy, which encompass transactions, trade, settlements, and more, but also to health care, education, politics and administration, and is fundamentally changing not only physical limitations, but also the way we work.

The digital transformation is also expanding into the realms of everyday living and production through smart cities, smart factories, and smart farms. AI particularly, which has been recently attracting attention with ChatGPT, is signaling that digital technology will someday engage in decision-making and value judgment, which have always been considered exclusive to humans.

The speed at which AI develops is so fast that human perception cannot keep up with it. At the 2022 Colorado State Fair, an AI-generated work took first place in an art competition. This incident suggests that artificial intelligence has reached the realm of inspiration. As things which were once only imagined are being realized, expectations for the near future only grow.

These rapid developments in science and technology, including artificial intelligence, are expected to improve the quality of life for people around the world and contribute to resolving social challenges such as global economic growth and the climate crisis. However, we can all agree that the differences in individual access to and ability to use ever-advancing AI technology have negative effects that

go beyond simple inconvenience and include deepening economic and social inequalities and discrimination.

Other examples of negative effects include basic human rights violations by artificial intelligence; the spread of prejudice or false information; infringements on personal information rights and copyrights; technological unemployment; worsening of social and economic inequalities; and the global technology gap between countries due to the development and dissemination of artificial intelligence technology led by major advanced countries.

As the daily lives of people around the world are closely related to digital technology, it is most urgent to lay the foundation for social integration and sustainable development by not only resolving and preventing the digital divide, but also ensuring that every nation and every member of a society can make good use of digital technology and evenly enjoy the benefits without alienation or discrimination.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Korea is preparing legal foundations in various fields such as the Electronic Government Act, the Electronic Financial Transactions Act, the Industrial Digital Transformation Promotion Act, and the Framework Act on the Promotion of Digital-Based Distance Education in order to effectively

promote science and technology innovations such as the digital transformation, and at the same time, protect companies and people from adverse effects.

Currently, the 22nd National Assembly is deliberating on 11 basic AI laws, including the Act on Fostering the Artificial Intelligence Industry and Securing Trust, to support the sound development of artificial intelligence and to protect the people's rights, interests, and dignity by laying down basic matters for building a trust base for an AI society. Also, a "Digital Inclusion Act" has been proposed and is under deliberation to ensure that everyone can participate in the digital world without discrimination or exclusion and enjoy the benefits of digital technology.

In June 2020, the Korean government decided on a "Digital Inclusion Promotion Plan for the Realization of an Innovative Inclusive Country," at a session of the Information and Communication Strategy Committee under the Prime Minister's Office, which aims to strengthen the digital capabilities of all and create an inclusive digital use environment, and has hence implemented relevant policies.

In addition, we are proceeding with a variety of policies, such as free STEM education for low-income families, female scientist support programs, employment-linked digital education for vulnerable groups, and youth science and technology training programs to ensure that women,

young people, and other vulnerable groups benefit from technical and scientific innovations.

We also continue to carry out Overseas Development Aid (ODA) projects to bridge the digital divide in developing countries. Education-related ODA projects, led by government ministries and private organizations, are one of the major such projects being undertaken by South Korea. Korea's best practices in the field of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) are being shared as model cases in many countries in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and other regions, and contribute to achievement of the 4th¹⁾ and 8th²⁾ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) suggested by the UN.

However, we still have a long way to go despite these endeavors. In order for the benefits of science and technology innovations to be evenly distributed among all members of society, the continuous interest and efforts of the delegations gathered here are required. The National Assembly of the Republic of Korea will continue to seek various policy and legislative directions through continuous cooperation and networking with the legislative assemblies of different countries, and ensure that every voice is reflected through social dialogue.

1) Ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

2) Promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all

Thank you.