

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Katalin Annamária Bogyay

at the High-Level Panel on

"Women in Innovation and Connectivity: The Role of the Private Sector"

15 May 2017, 15h, Conference Room 11, UN Headquarters

Your Royal Highness,

Your Excellences,

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Permanent Representative of Hungary to the UN and member of the Steering Committee of the World Science Forum that deals also with the important topic of innovation, I am honoured to address today's high-level panel.

I had the pleasure to be part of the preparation of the World Science Forum starting with the very first World Science Conference in 1999 initiated by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and UNESCO with the support of the Government of Hungary. Based on the success of this first event, the Forum evolved by now into one of the most important gatherings of the scientific sphere. Since 2013, it is being hosted every four year outside Budapest. For the first time it was hosted by a foreign partner, it was taken to Rio de Janeiro in 2013 with a great success. At the end of this year, the Forum is taking place in Amman, Jordan focusing on the theme of Science for Peace.

On 28 April with the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations, I co-hosted the high-level event entitled "Science for Peace" at the Trusteeship Council Chamber presenting the theme of this year's Forum. We had the pleasure to have Her Royal Highness Princess Sumaya bint Hassan, President of the Royal Scientific Society of Jordan and Professor László Lovász, President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences travel to New York for this occasion. The Princess will be the Chairperson and Professor Lovász the President of this year's Forum.

Our well-attended event showed how science and innovation can help to understand the underlying factors of pressing global challenges and advance sustainable solutions by transforming decision making to an evidence-based approach.

At the Forum in Amman, on 7-11th November dedicated sessions will deal with the challenges and opportunities of the digital transformation, as well as building resilience in an interconnected world. I will have the rewarding task of leading the panel on Women in Science.

Science and innovation encompass the interlinkages of all policy areas that enable sustainable development and inclusive economic growth that should contribute to peace and security around the globe. Yet science and innovation is less tangible in the current diplomatic scene, even though it has a huge potential in conflict prevention and resolution through building bridges among different stakeholders.

Prevention is a priority for my country's work in the United Nations. I am convinced that capitalizing the meaningful contribution of innovation to tackling the root causes of poverty and instability, as the most important underlying sources of conflict can significantly reduce crisis from occurring or aggravating.

Hungary sees connectivity as a window of opportunity to raise the profile of innovation and I welcome today's Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation, as well as the SDG high-level Action Event on Innovation and Connectivity convened by the President of the General Assembly for 17 May. Hungary will be represented at the Action Event by H.E. Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Science, innovation and technology are integral part of Agenda 2030 and should be our avenue in better understanding global challenges facing us, and identifying global responses we can jointly aim at. The most important difference of the SDGs compared to the MDGs and at the same time the largest challenge and opportunity lies in bringing together the implementation of the goals with gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Today a significant gender gap persists in science all over the world, including in innovation and technology. This untapped potential of brilliant girls and women is a great loss of opportunity, both for women themselves and for the society and the economy as a whole. Gender equality should therefore be considered as a crucial mean to promote scientific and technological excellence.

Hungary's National Research-development and Innovation Strategy for the period 2013-2020, entitled "Investment in the Future", establishes the priority of creating equal opportunities for women in the Research, Development and Innovation sector.

Digitalisation is the engine of the economy; it leverages the development dividend through efficiency gains, while boosting productivity and competitiveness. Our reality today reflects that the digitalized world is becoming ever more interconnected, much faster than expected. The expanding networks of the interconnected digital devices require proper information communication infrastructure that follows global changes. It is therefore a strategic question for all of our countries here in the United Nations to be able to join the global trends and prepare for the accelerating digital transformation of the globe.

The digital economy currently represents more than 20% of Hungary's GDP and provides almost 15% of our employees with jobs. The Government considers digital economy as a top priority for growth and employment. The country's Digital Development Program for 2014-2020 lays down four strategic areas for information communication development; these are infrastructure, competencies, economics and governance. We are proud that our 4G mobile network is the fourth fastest and most reliable on global scale.

After 2020 the 5G mobile service will be able to provide almost unlimited bandwidths, creating the infrastructural background in all the sectors requiring high-speed data transfer along with more complex and heterogeneous digital networks.

I am proud to share that Hungary aims to attract 5G developments, to introduce them among the first actors, and to play a leading role in the implementation regionally.

My country is ready to contribute to the global efforts by bringing forward the regional initiatives in Central Europe on the digital transformation. Budapest has hosted several outstanding regional forums for strategic thinking in the recent past. After a successful inaugural event in March 2016, the think.BDPST conference just this March focused on the challenges and perspectives of new technologies and innovation in employment, education, healthcare and medicine. The Regional Digital Summit in November 2016 gave visibility to the challenges raised by digitalization, provided a meeting point for decision makers with leading representatives of the industry and contributed to both the implementation of the European Digital Agenda and the competitiveness of the European economy by calling for synergy of actions at regional levels and beyond. As a key outcome, the Summit highlighted that digitalization offers a development opportunity for excellence based research and development entrepreneurship as well as digital innovative infrastructure capacities in every Member State.

The Prime Ministers of the Visegrad Group (Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic) recently joined their commitments in a common declaration of intent on reinforcing their cooperation in innovation and digital affairs. This Warsaw Declaration embraces the role research and innovation play in advancing the digital economy and the single European market, and actually calls for a single digital market for Europe.

Among the Visegrad countries, Hungary is firmly committed to one of the most important demonstrations of digital economy that is the future of the automotive industry, in particular with regard to the development of automated driving and connecting vehicles. We are eager to keep the topic on the agenda at all relevant international fora.

Let's be cautious however, knowing that the connected, more and more complex systems carry more risks as well Hungary introduced an updated security system for cyber protection among the first ones in the world. Besides compliance with EU regulations, we strive to further support research and development for cyber security, and to strengthen information security related to national security.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Association of Hungarian Women in Science organized a competition under my patronage for university students entitled SCI-ndicator in the field of communicating about their research area just a couple of weeks ago, I would like to share a personal experience. The first prize of the contest had been awarded to a second year computer science and engineering student, Serb-Hungarian citizen Kristóf Muhi, who developed an application for smart phones that allows playing with the colored three-dimension logic game, Rubik's Cube for blind and partially sighted persons. His prize included a stay in New York, hosted by the Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN, during which he became acquainted with the work of the UN and learned about the science-policy interface, including through participation at the conference on Science for Peace.

His presence in the UN carried the symbolic message about the role youth and especially young, innovative talents can play in our joint quest for a sustainable and peaceful future that should indeed be linked to the abstract areas of science, innovation and technology.

As a closing remark, I would like to send a strong signal to the younger generation that our planet's future and its pathway to development is in their hands. I would encourage them to act responsibly and while enjoying the benefits of the digital world, think about next generations to come and stay ethical in their use of modern technological devices.

I thank you for your kind attention!