Mr. Chairman,

1 My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by Fiji on behalf of the G77 and China, and by Thailand on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN), on this agenda item. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the reports on this agenda item.

Mr Chairman,

2 It is generally agreed that globalization in the context of trade influences prosperity and contributes to poverty eradication. In recent years, globalization has been inextricably linked to science, technology and innovation. The ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review in July this year affirmed science, technology and innovation as enablers for sustainable development and as important elements of the post-2015 development agenda.

3 For three consecutive years, Singapore has ranked second in the World Economic Forum’s Global Competitiveness Index. Singapore is a small island state of only 700 square kilometers, with no natural resources but only its people. At the outset, we had to take a pragmatic approach towards development and focus on science, technology, engineering and math to build a knowledge society and equip our people with the know-how to significantly increase economic activity. Our development over the years has been in large part due to our strong focus on education and training, and consequent labour market efficiency and technological readiness.

4 Recognising the potential of technology as a powerful education multiplier,
Singapore integrated it into our education system early on. In fact, 2013 is the penultimate year to the conclusion of three successive masterplans that Singapore has launched to scale up the application of information and communication technology (ICT) in our schools.

Exposure to science and technology cannot stop outside the school, but instead, must be integrated into the foundations of society to ensure lifelong learning and opportunities for the people. In this regard, Singapore has taken steps to make ICT accessible to our people, regardless of socioeconomic status, gender or disability. By introducing information and communication products and services into daily living through Singapore's Intelligent Nation (iN2015) Masterplan, we have made strides towards creating an information and communication-savvy public. Investing in our people and infrastructure has borne fruit, as it fuels other economic activities and adds jobs to the economy. Since the iN2015 masterplan, information and communication revenues have grown by 120 percent in a period of six years to S$102 billion in 2012.

Science and technology is not just a vehicle for economic growth. It is also a means to create sustainable practices for Singapore. As a country with close to zero natural water resources, we have innovated and developed new technologies to reuse our water resources to meet our water needs. Cutting-edge membrane technology is used to treat waste water to produce high-grade, ultra-clean reclaimed water, called NEWater. NEWater is used not just for drinking but also in wafer fabrication, electronics and power generation industries.

Mr Chairman,

Singapore's experiences demonstrate the key role which science and technology play in poverty eradication and sustainable development. In addition, they also illustrate that culture is both an enabler and driver for sustainable development. By adopting a people-centric approach which is responsive to the local and cultural context, Singapore is able to create conditions for sustainable development that is inclusive and equitable. In this regard, Singapore supports the consideration of science and technology, as well as culture in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

Mr Chairman,
In the spirit of global partnerships, Singapore has sought to share with other countries our experiences in development. In the words of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon during the 2013 substantive session of the ECOSOC, “every development success has drawn in large measure from absorbing knowledge, technology and ideas and adapting them to local conditions.” We believe that it is essential to share our experiences and knowledge, if only to shorten the developmental journey that another country would have to take.

Through the Singapore Cooperation Programme, we have trained over 800,000 government officials from 170 countries over 20 years. The courses we have offered span a broad range of subjects including attracting foreign investments and enabling private sector growth, and sustainable urban and transport planning. Singapore remains committed to cooperation among developing countries, and will continue to play our part where we can.

Thank you Mr Chairman.