

**INAUGURATION CEREMONY FOR THE UN TECHNOLOGY BANK  
FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. FARUK ÖZLÜ, MINISTER OF SCIENCE, INDUSTRY  
AND TECHNOLOGY OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY**

**Esteemed Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Her Excellency  
Amina J. Mohammed,**

**Distinguished Ministers,**

**Honorable Governor,**

**Esteemed Under-Secretary-General and High Representative Ms. Fekitamoeloa  
Katoa Utoikamanu,**

**Ambassadors,**

**Secretaries General,**

**Distinguished Participants,**

I would like to welcome you to the inauguration ceremony for the United Nations Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries.

Firstly, I wish to underline the great honor and pleasure I have to host this important event on behalf of our Government.

I would like to express my special gratitude to Her Excellency Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, for her valuable presence and express my warm welcome.

I wish to also express my great pleasure to see here with us today His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Al-Sadi, Minister of Development and Cooperation of Yemen; His Excellency Mr. Abdoulaye Yero Balde, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of Guinea; and Her Excellency Ms. Marianne Hagen, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway.

As you know, the Technology Bank which we are inaugurating today, constitutes an important and historic turning point in the global efforts to strengthen the science, technology and innovation capacity of the Least Developed Countries, which currently stand at 47.

However, it was not easy to reach this point.

The idea to create a Technology Bank for the LDCs came up seven years ago during the 4<sup>th</sup> Conference for the LDCs which was hosted by our country for the first time in May 2011. This idea was reflected as a call to create a Technology Bank for the LDCs in the Action Plan which was adopted at the conclusion of the Conference.

Operationalizing the Technology Bank was referred to in the Action Plan adopted at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International UN Conference on Financing for Development, as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in September 2015.

On 23 December 2016, the UN General Assembly decided that the Technology Bank would be hosted in our country. After the signing of the Host Country and Financial and In-Kind Support Agreements by our Minister of Foreign Affairs during the 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly last year, the steps to realize this project, to which we attach great importance, were quickly taken by Turkey, in collaboration with the UN.

I wish to draw your attention to the fact that with the establishment of the Technology Bank, the 2030 SDG No. 17.8 has been achieved.

This project constitutes one of the most significant manifestations of the entrepreneurial and humanitarian foreign policy approach adopted by our country.

In the context of our humanitarian foreign policy, we run to the assistance of the most vulnerable; we extend a helping hand to people who suffer from poverty, conflicts and natural disasters and we attach importance to multi-dimensional cooperation in the framework of an understanding of mutual interest. At the same time, we also focus on increasing trade and investments.

In the 1980s, we started the first technical cooperation program for the Sub-Saharan African countries. After the Cold War, we implemented development programs especially in Central Asia, the South Caucasus and the Balkans.

Recently, we further developed these programs to also cover the Middle East, Africa, Asia, the Pasific and Latin America. We are currently implementing these programs in 120 countries.

I would like to seize this opportunity to hightlight that with 8.2 billion USD of official development aid in 2017, Turkey has become one of the biggest ODA contributors in the world in comparison to its GDP.

We give special attention to collaborating closely with local authorities in extending official development aid to different countries. In addition to short term humanitarian aid, we give priority to development aid with a particular focus on capacity building.

LDCs hold a special place in our development aid.

It is with this understanding that we aspired to host the UN Technology Bank for the LDCs. It is also with the same understanding that we decided to establish the TÜBİTAK Marmara Teknokent (MARTEK) Corporation facilities which we believe will present many opportunities for the UN Technology Bank.

I would like to shortly dwell on the reasons for establishing the Technology Bank in MARTEK.

With its location in MARTEK, the Technology Bank will be close to the IT Valley that we are currently setting up in Gebze, as well as the TÜBİTAK Institutes, and will benefit from the ecosystem created by MARTEK, the IT Valley and the Institutes.

The Bank will also be located close to entrepreneurs who strive to develop high-tech products, perform in international platforms and take their R&D activities to international markets through establishing foreign partnerships.

At the same time, the synergy which will be created with the capacity of TÜBİTAK and its Institutes and the opportunities presented by the IT Valley will add even more strenght to the Technology Bank.

Our Institutes will also contribute to the Technology Bank in terms of human resources and new project and cooperation opportunities in the context of joint cooperation projects within the framework of the Science, Technology and Innovation Support Mechanism which constitutes one of the core areas of activity of the Technology Bank.

Starting from 2017, Turkey has already committed an annual financial contribution of 2 million USD for a 5 year term and, as the host country, has also undertaken the administrative costs of the Bank, which will be financed through voluntary contributions.

Within this framework, I would like to express my appreciation to the Government of Norway for its voluntary contribution of 1 million USD to the Bank, as well as Sudan, Bangladesh and the Philippines which have committed to contribute. I would like to call upon other UN Member States to also contribute to the Bank.

Without any doubt, the involvement of the private sector will be an important element in the success of the Technology Bank. The presence of the representatives of the private sector and foundations from our country and beyond is an indicator of the interest generated by the Technology Bank. In this regard, I would like to note the presence of the representatives of the Global Goods Intellectual Venture, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Commonwealth of Nations here today.

The Memorandum of Cooperation which will be shortly signed today in your presence between the Technology Bank and the Global Good and TÜBİTAK will demonstrate to us that the Bank will be strengthened through partnerships that it will launch in the period ahead.

I wish to express to Global Good our gratitude to have had the confidence in the Technology Bank since the very start.

In concluding my words, I would like to thank all those who have contributed in the process of the establishment of the Technology Bank from our relevant institutions and our staff. I wish to also express my gratitude to the UN family for their support and cooperation. I sincerely hope that the Technology Bank will effectively render the services expected from it to provide solutions to the development problems and to meet the needs of the LDCs.

The Panel which will be organized following the opening ceremony will provide the opportunity to discuss the different dimensions of the important role that the Bank will play in the development of the LDCs.

We will also benefit from the views that will be voiced out during the Panel.

Our country will continue to extend the necessary support for the success of the Bank.

With these views and sentiments, I thank you once again for your valuable presence today.