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Secretary-General's message to Conference on Israeli Innovation and Technology in Africa

[Delivered by Mr. Maged Abdelaziz, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa]

I am pleased to greet this important gathering.

Israel's achievements in technology and innovation are world-renowned. Called by some the "start-up" nation, Israel has catapulted itself from the position of a low-income country to a member of the OECD within two generations.

This great advance has been made possible by investing in human capital, and by encouraging creativity and risk taking.

I commend Israel for sharing its experiences with other countries, and helping them to address challenges in many key fields, including agriculture, health, cybersecurity and alternative energy.

Israel's growing engagement in development efforts was also on display through its contribution to the fight against Ebola.

Last December, the General Assembly passed a resolution on agricultural technology for sustainable development, which was initiated and promoted by Israel.

One year earlier, the Assembly adopted another Israeli-sponsored resolution promoting entrepreneurship.

And Israeli lifesaving technology is being put to use by UN peacekeeping.

As Africa strives to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's ambitious Agenda 2063, we know that partnerships will be crucial for success.

Africa's population is young, dynamic and well placed to seize the opportunities offered by innovation and technology.

The United Nations looks forward to working with all of you to unleash these great capacities and enable all Africans to realize their aspirations for peace and prosperity on a healthy planet.

I wish you success in this important work. Let's make Africa the start-up continent!

Please accept my best wishes for a productive conference.