



Remarks

by

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President of the 68th Session of the United Nations

General Assembly

New York

26 November 2013

**Sustainable Energy for All
High-Level Reception and Dinner**

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Excellencies,
Secretary-General,
President of the World Bank, Mr. Jim Kim,
SRSG, Dr. Kandeh Yumkella,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we look back at the successes and shortcomings of the Millennium Development Goals, the issue of energy access appears clearly as an overlooked opportunity. Like water, energy powers our societies and our way of life; it facilitates both the most basic aspects of our lives, as well as the most profound. And as you, Secretary General, have never failed to remind us, energy is the “golden thread” that connects economic growth, environmental resilience and social equity.

This gem of a reminder should be front and center as we begin to turn our attention to the post 2015 development agenda. In many ways, the search for energy is as at the heart of development, or said another way, the history of development is the story of humanity’s desire to access and the successfully harness reliable sources of energy. Behind the quest for energy is humankind’s instinct to grow and expand.

And while securing a reliable and sustainable source of energy is also at the heart of poverty eradication, it is an issue that affects every country of the world. We are united in the desire for securing a sustainable supply of energy that does not damage our planet.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All countries great and small need energy security but the smallest among them approach the energy issue from a somewhat different perspective. Most of these countries are very much dependent on imported oil and other fossil fuels for transport and electricity generation. And while they are the least of the offenders in terms of contributing to global emissions, they are highly vulnerable to climate change.

The good news is that many of these countries are in a privileged position to exploit feasible options for providing energy such as wind, solar, geothermal, and ocean energy. Given the ready availability of renewable energy sources, these developing countries have the potential to become models and testing grounds for green energy technologies and other initiatives through elements of South-South and Triangular Cooperation and other forms of partnerships, including between governments and the private sector, which can be replicated and scaled up, while adapting to local conditions.

Excellencies,

This is where and perhaps why an initiative such as the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative provides an excellent starting point. It has established critical objectives for global development, building on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities by addressing energy policy and systems in both developed and developing countries. Inherent in this initiative is the core element for the green economy and the building of green systems. The benefits of SE4All have the potential to span beyond just energy access, spurring new green innovations, providing decent work and improving quality of life all around the world. Its principles are likely to impact on other sectors including transport, water and agriculture, to name a few, and it will ultimately involve the private sector, that increasingly embraces sustainability practices including green energy.

It should also be noted that the initiative provides the means by which we can achieve national and global development aspirations while containing our carbon footprint and living within our planetary boundaries, and when fully implemented it will allow for energy security and energy independence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As President of the General Assembly, I have continuously stressed the need for a stronger integration of energy into the Post-2015 Development Agenda. I am committed

to advancing this discussion, for example, through the thematic debate I will convene in 2014 on water, energy and sanitation in the Post 2015 development agenda.

The UN General Assembly has also declared 2014 to 2024 as the UN Decade for Sustainable Energy for All, which provides an additional opportunity for sharing information, facilitating dialogue, and raising the profile of this critical issue, and most important, for attaining the objectives of SE4All and engendering green pathways to global and sustainable development.

Through these various initiatives and our sustained commitment, we can ensure that the missed opportunity to include energy in the MDGs is rectified in the emerging post 2015 development agenda, and that our shared goal of providing sustainable energy is not only realistic and achievable, but inevitable.

Thank you.
