Interactive Thematic Dialogue of the United Nations General Assembly on "Energy Efficiency, Energy Conservation and New and Renewable Sources of Energy"

Thursday, 18 June 2009
Trusteeship Council Chamber

OPENING SESSION:
10:00 -10:30 AM

Introductory remarks by **H.E. Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,** President of the United Nations General Assembly

Address by **H.E. Ban Ki Moon,** Secretary General of the United Nations

- Keynote speech address by **Professor Hoesung Lee (Vice Chair Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)**

PANEL I: **Panel 1: Status and Prospects: Energy Efficiency and New and Renewable Sources of Energy**
10.30 AM–01:00 PM

This panel and session will explore the potential of new and renewable sources of energy, energy efficiency and energy conservation in promoting sustainable development.

- What is the status of leading technologies? How can they be deployed at scale?
- What are the key barriers facing the wider deployment of renewable and energy efficiency technologies? How can they be overcome?
- What are success stories and lessons learned, including incentives and policy measures?
- How to improve the United Nations efforts on deploying technologies at scale, overcoming barriers and sharing best practices?

Moderator**:** **Mr. Timothy E. Wirth**, UN Foundation
[Each panellist speaks for 5 minutes]

1. **Mr. Kandeh Yumkella,** Director-General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization

   The United Nations efforts on deploying technologies at scale, overcoming barriers and sharing best practices and ways to improve these efforts.

2. **Prof. Nebojsa Nakicenovic,** Global Energy Assessment

   The status of leading technologies and the ways to deploy them at scale.

3. **Mr. Joe Loper,** Senior Vice President, Policy and Research, Alliance to Save Energy

   Energy Efficiency

4. **Ms. Leena Srivastava,** Executive Director TERI, India

   The key barriers facing the wider deployment of renewable and energy efficiency technologies and the ways to overcome these barriers.

5. **Prof. Sergio Garribba,** Advisor on Policy for the Italian Ministry of Economic Development

   North-South Cooperation on Energy.

OPENING AFTERNOON SESSION:
3:00 – 3:20 PM

Statement by **H.E. Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,** President of the United Nations General Assembly

- Keynote speech address by **Dr. Mohamed Waheed Hassan,** Vice-President of the Republic of Maldives.

PANEL II: **Panel 2: Meeting the Challenge: Investment and Policies**
3.20 – 5:40 PM This panel and session will explore the policies and investment needed to promote renewable and energy efficiency.

- What measures and incentives can be adopted to ensure that investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy are sustained during the financial and economic crisis?
- What policies can stimulate technological innovation and the rapid and widespread development, transfer and diffusion of renewable and energy efficiency technologies?
- What needs to be done to create legal and policy incentives for the promotion of investments, technology development and transfer taking into account national and international needs and development goals?
- How to improve the United Nations efforts in creating legal and policy incentives?

Moderator**:** **Mr. Vijay Vaitheeswaran**, The Economist
[Each panellist speaks for 5 minutes]

1. **Mr. Steen Gade**, MP Denmark / Interparliamentary Union

   Measures and incentives for sustained investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy taking into account the financial and economic crisis.

2. **Mr. Santiago Seage** Chairman and CEO of Abengoa Solar, Spain

Legal and policy incentives for the promotion of investments, technology development and transfer:

3. **M. Said Mouline**, Directeur Général du Centre Marocain des Energies
Mme. Hélène Pelosse, Ministry of Energy, France.

(Joint Presentation on the *Mediterranean Solar Plan Project*)

Global centres of excellence and projects for renewable energy research, development, and innovation**.**

4. **H.E. Ms. Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl**, Ambassador and Director General for Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria

Energy for Sustainable Development: The Leverage of Development Cooperation.

5. **Mr. Tariq Banuri**, Director, Division for Sustainable Development/ CSD Secretariat UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Policies to stimulate technological innovation and the rapid and widespread development, transfer and diffusion of renewable and energy efficiency technologies**.**

CLOSING SESSION
5:40 – 6:00pm

Closing remarks

Interactive Thematic Dialogue of the U.N. General Assembly on "Energy Efficiency, Energy Conservation and New and Renewable Sources of Energy"

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Energy efficiency and energy conservation, new and renewable sources of energy play a key role in economic and social development and the achievement of the MDGs, as well as in tackling the challenge of energy security and climate change. The development and deployment, as well as the transfer and scale-up of related technologies need to be fostered through international cooperation and partnerships.

Panel I: Status and Prospects: Energy Efficiency and New and Renewable Sources of Energy

Renewable energy sources and energy efficiency can contribute significantly to achieving a sustainable energy future as well as energy security. Renewable energy technologies offer vast technical potential, including the concentration and harnessing of solar power (CSP) and solar photovoltaic (PV), wind power (onshore and offshore), hydro-power, ocean, and geothermal power.[1] Renewable energy contributes in four distinct sectors: electric power generation, hot water and space heating, transport fuels, and rural (off-grid) energy. At present, renewables represent 5 percent of global power generation capacity. Renewable energy technologies are experiencing rapid growth, with grid-connected solar photovoltaic (PV) constituting the fastest growing energy technology in 2006 and 2007. Developing countries as a group have more than 40 percent of installed renewable power capacity, more than 70 percent of existing solar hot water capacity, and 45 percent of biofuels production.[2]

Increased energy efficiency can reduce the required investment in energy infrastructure, cut fuel costs, increase competitiveness and improve consumer welfare in the long term. Consumers and businesses could save as much $600 billion a year by 2020 just by using existing technologies, whereas investment in higher energy efficiency could amount to $90 billion annually.[3] Energy efficiency, especially in buildings, is singled out as the most promising near-term mitigation option.

Although renewable energies offer a prospect for low-cost sustainable energy supply, the first investment costs are often high. Therefore, the main obstacle in facing renewable energy remains still cost-competitiveness, so that stimulating private investment has required various forms of support mechanisms. Policy initiatives to support the deployment and scaling-up of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies are concentrated on research and innovation, market deployment and market-based mechanisms.[4] It is imperative to have a sound combination of policies that address specific barriers and/or complement existing policies, e.g. supporting research, development and deployment (RD&D) investments to

[1] Ecofys/REN21, 2008
[2] Ren21 Status Report 2007
[3] McKinsey & Company, 2009
[4] Policy targets for renewable energy exist in at least 66 countries worldwide (REN21, 2007).

increase the competitiveness of the technology; support with provision of feed-in tariffs, low-interest loans, capital grants, and for example local support for manufacturing of wind turbines. To encourage private sector involvement/investment, longevity and predictability of policy support are important to overall market success and therefore the possibility for larger deployment (e.g. feed-in tariffs for renewable energy sources mostly have an eight- to twenty-year time frame). Especially newest renewable energy technologies (like offshore wind, including floating; thin-film PV, third generation PV, CSP, enhanced geothermal systems, advanced biomass gasification, advanced biofuel, bio-refinery technology, and ocean energy, as well as nanotechnology) depend on long term research, development and deployment commitments that must be ensured by public policies.[5]

Panelists are invited to address the following key issues or concerns:

- Which renewable and energy efficiency technologies are most promising today and for the future? Which technologies are best suited to be deployed at large scale?
- What are the principle constraints that hinder a wider deployment of renewable and energy efficiency technologies?
- What needs to be done to deploy approved and leading technologies at the necessary scale towards sustainable development? What are the success stories or lessons learned that can help Member States move towards their goal of sustainability?
- How can the United Nations contribute to improving the deployment of these technologies at scale, including overcoming barriers and to foster sharing best practices?
- What is the potential role of renewable energy technologies in addressing the major world challenge of energy access and, in particular, of developing countries?

Panel II: Meeting the Challenge: Investment and Policies

In 2007 global investment in sustainable energy reached $148.4 billion (60% increase over 2006).[6] Investment in new renewable energy capacity (asset finance) was $84.5 billion (mainly investment in wind sector with $50.2 billion, followed by solar sector with $28.6 billion). The global carbon market is one important way to channel private investment towards low-carbon technology in developing countries, with the portfolio of Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects in 2007 valued at almost $13 billion.[7] If international commitments in sustainable development and reducing greenhouse gas emissions are to be achieved, investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency must continue to grow firmly.[8]

The present financial crisis poses significant new challenges and opportunities for renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, especially their transfer to developing countries. It is very likely that private investment in these types of technologies will fall both

[5] International Energy Agency, 2007
[6] Total financial transaction in sustainable energy accounted for $204.9 billion (including $7.5 billion of energy efficiency investment).
[7] International Emissions Trading Association Report, 2008.
[8] UNEP SEFI/New Energy Finance, 2008

during and in the immediate aftermath of this crisis. A possible policy response is a significant increase in public investment, at both the national and international level, in large-scale renewables and energy efficiency development. To move forward, both public and private sector investments will be required in infrastructure, technology development and production of renewable energy, and greater energy efficiency. Governments could provide incentives for consumers and utilities to improve their energy efficiency, such as by providing revenue incentives and certification programs, as well as by enforcing standards and encouraging Public-Private Partnerships.

Access to reliable, affordable and clean energy is fundamental for sustainable development. Developing countries face enormous challenges in trying to erase the huge backlog in providing energy services to their populations at affordable prices; it is estimated that nearly 1.6 billion people lack access to modern energy services. Renewable energy can play a role in tackling this challenge, but public policies will be needed in order to bring down their costs.

Panelists are invited to address the following key issues or concerns:

- In the face of the current global financial and economic crisis, what measures and incentives are needed to ensure investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency?
- What policies can stimulate technological innovation? What policies favor the rapid and widespread development, transfer and diffusion of renewable and energy efficiency technologies?
- What needs to be done to create incentives for the promotion of investment, technology development and transfer? What can be done to provide legal and public policy incentives? How do we take into account national and international needs and long-term development goals?
- How can technology transfer and diffusion strategies and frameworks promote access to clean and renewable sources of energy for the world's poor?
- How can an energy transition be an opportunity for economic growth and poverty alleviation in developing countries? What are the implications and tradeoffs in promoting these alternatives? (e.g. impacts on fossil fuel imports, reconversion of industrial activities).

Interactive Thematic Dialogue of the United Nations General Assembly on "Energy Efficiency, Energy Conservation and New and Renewable Sources of Energy"
18 June 2009

Opening Session:

1. In his opening statement the President of the General Assembly underlined that the climate change challenge, the financial and economic crisis, and the food crisis converge, interact, fuel and exacerbate each other. He noted that energy is necessary for the daily survival as well as for economic development, but that the current energy path is unsustainable. He stressed that inequitable energy patterns, with over consumption of energy in some parts of the world and insufficient access in many others. A technology revolution is needed to reconcile development and growing energy needs with steps to mitigate climate change and the general carrying capacity of the earth. The recovery from the current economic and financial crisis should be coupled with visionary policies, innovative technologies and broad incentives for new and renewable sources of energy. He noted the important role of the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen in December with respect to establishing a new generation of financial incentives, based on the Kyoto mechanisms, for directing financing flows towards development of renewable energy production in developing countries.

2. The Secretary General stressed the role that energy efficiency and renewable energy play for significantly cutting greenhouse gas emissions as well as for creating new employment opportunities. He stated that energy efficiency and renewable energy are tools that not only help to de-link economic growth from rising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, but also contribute significantly in alleviating poverty and empowering the billions of people whose development is held back by lack of electricity. Therefore, renewable energy and energy efficiency are important for clean development not only for developed but also for developing countries. He noted the support by the United Nations (UN) to developing countries in identifying locations for new and renewable energy sources. However, one of the obstacles to be overcome is limited access to finance. He emphasized that strong government policies are required that send the right signals to markets to boost renewable energy and energy efficiency and stimulate investment of the private sector. Additionally, capacities have to be enhanced to access financial mechanisms such as the (Clean Development Mechanism). Moreover, he stressed the need for governments to finalize in Copenhagen a new climate change agreement that is comprehensive, fair and ambitious. The Secretary General concluded by underlining that a transformation of the global energy market is essential and that energy efficiency and renewable energy offer an opportunity to simultaneously tackle the challenges of climate change, energy security and poverty alleviation.

3. Professor Hoesung Lee (Vice Chair Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) in his keynote speech underlined that energy efficiency and renewable energy are major vehicles in reducing GHG emissions. He noted that in the past, improvements and energy intensity and fuel substitutions had been more than outweighed by the effects of

economic and population growth on GHG emissions. In order to achieve the needed low-carbon transformation of energy systems, it is essential that greenhouse gas emitters pay a price for their emissions, while Governments support technology research and development. This transition would take decades due to the long life of energy infrastructure. He noted that public support for energy research and development has not increased over the last 15 years. He emphasized that the uncertainty concerning the social cost of carbon should not excuse the world from implementing carbon prices.

Panel 1: Status and Prospects: Energy Efficiency and New and Renewable Sources of Energy

4. The panel comprised the Director General of UNIDO and leading energy experts from research institutions and non-governmental organizations. The panellists stressed that energy plays a central role in addressing the food crisis, climate change, poverty eradication and economic development. Establishing a new Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on energy access would be warranted. They stressed that energy should not be looked at from a climate change perspective alone. Instead, a twin strategic approach is needed to address climate change and energy access. The lack of access to modern fuels as well as the high energy intensity of industrial production processes in major regions of the world has serious impacts on climate change.

5. Panellists noted that energy efficiency plays a large role in the needed paradigm shift towards sustainable energy. Whereas improvements in energy efficiency have massively contributed to limiting the rise in energy demand, its potential often remains untapped in both developed and developing countries. One panellist noted that investing in energy efficiency can also 'buy time' before new low-carbon energy technologies become available. Technologies for achieving energy efficiency often exist. However, there are many market barriers that prevent their efficient employment, such as socially inefficient pricing uncertainty over future energy prices, technological lock-in, lack of information, and the separation between investors in energy efficiency measures and beneficiaries, for example in rental buildings. Policies to overcome these barriers include rationalizing energy pricing, such as introducing carbon prices and limiting energy subsidies, as well as standards and information labelling.

6. Panellists noted that whereas investments and capacity in renewable energy, in particular wind and photovoltaic, had been massively increasing until last year, investment in 2009 may drop by 38 per cent due to the economic crisis. Therefore, renewable energy should receive attention in economic recovery packages. In order to achieve cost reductions in renewable energy, experience has shown that public support to basic research and development, applied research and development and investment in early technology stages is necessary. Unfortunately, overall public support to energy and research and development has been constant since the aftermath of the oil price shocks in the 1970s and early 1980s. Moreover, in many regions in the world, commercial banking systems are not conducive to financing renewables. In addition to energy efficiency and

renewable energies, options such as advanced nuclear energy, carbon capture and storage and sustainable transport systems should also be explored.

7. A panellist also informed about UN-Energy, a United Nations interagency mechanism on energy, which works on energy access, energy efficiency and promotion of renewable energy. In its work UN-Energy stresses the coordination of capacity building and the importance of energy access for the achievement of the MDGs. Other panellists outlined the role of the United Nations in training and capacity building, the facilitation of formulating national energy policies, awareness raising, reduction of transaction costs, risk coverage and promoting South-South cooperation.

Opening of afternoon session:

8. In his statement in the afternoon, the President of the General Assembly underscored the importance of energy for achieving the MDGs. He noted the need for technology transfer and fulfilling financial obligations, as well as for a reorientation of development policies of international financial institutions. He also stressed the moral imperative of the responsibility to protect the populations of small island developing States (SIDS) and least-developed countries (LDCs) who are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

9. In his keynote address in the afternoon, Dr. Mohammed Waheed Hassan, Vice-president of the Republic of the Maldives, highlighted the vulnerability of the Maldives to climate change and sea level rise. He noted that sea level rise is forcing the Maldives to undertake and explore adaptation measures such as building sea walls, moving inhabitants internally to less vulnerable islands, and even finding new homeland outside the Maldives. Despite its insignificant emissions, the Maldives are committed to be the first carbon neutral country in 2020, thereby demonstrating leadership. He underlined that with rising oil prices, the high investments for transitioning from fossil fuels to renewables may pay-off within 11 years, and noted the carbon neutrality may lead to additional tourism revenues.

Panel 2: Meeting the Challenges: Investment and Policies

10. The second panel comprised experts from parliaments, governments, the private sector and the United Nations. Again, the urgency of the twin challenges of energy access and climate change were stressed. Moreover, panellists highlighted the importance of improvements in energy efficiency and savings, also for developing countries Access to energy for sustainable development must be crowded out by climate change mitigation considerations. One panellist, putting these challenges in the broader context of sustainable development, noted that a daily per capita consumption of primary energy of around 100-150 kWh, as well as full access to electricity appears to be a prerequisite for achieving a reasonable level of development, as measured by a score of the Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.9-0.95. Therefore, the strategies for massively expanding renewable energy must be different for developed and developing countries. In case of

the former, addressing climate change requires raising costs of energy, whereas developing countries require lower costs to overcome poverty.

11. A global strategy is needed to allow technological leapfrogging of developing countries. Such a strategy may include a global feed-in tariffs and a focus of investment in developing countries. Another panellist pointed out the advantages of first developing and employing technologies in developed countries, followed by technology transfer to developing countries when technologies become mature.

12. Panellists pointed out that promoting renewable energy is not only needed in response to climate change and energy access, but also in response to rising prices for fossil fuels. Nevertheless, public support is needed in all stages of technology development, as demonstrated by the experiences in wind and solar technologies. Overall, panellists stressed the importance of expanding research and development, including through global networks of research centres, joint research institutions and public-private partnerships. In developed countries, the cost of transitioning towards renewable energy has proven to be affordable.

13. Panellists stressed the role of regional and international cooperation. North-South and South-South regional cooperation in renewable energy can help developing countries to increase the share of renewable energy, while also creating substantial economic benefits from electricity exports in addition to meeting domestic energy demands, reducing emissions and creating new jobs. Other solutions proposed included capacity building projects, sharing of best- practices and technology transfer Proactive policies in developing countries as well as facilitation of access to innovative financing tools and appropriate regulatory frameworks in developed countries are necessary. International development cooperation can also play a role in leveraging funds for energy for sustainable development, even though official development assistance (ODA) in total is declining and the share of renewable energy is very small.

Interactive discussions

14. Many delegations underscored the central role of energy in achieving sustainable development goals. Technological advancement in energy is needed for development. Participants highlighted that increased energy efficiency and energy conservation, together with the deployment of new and renewable sources of energy would contribute to sustainable development, including the MDGs. However, for many developing countries existing renewable energy technologies are often unaffordable. It was noted that energy saving and energy efficiency represent one of the most rapid and affordable ways to address energy security and climate change, while maintaining economic growth. Changes in energy structures are necessary not only for combating climate change, but also bring other benefits such as reductions in air pollution, including indoor air pollution.

15. Participants advocated moving towards a new concept of energy security, going beyond import dependency. Both regional and international cooperation were suggested

elements of an expanded definition of energy security, as were the question of energy access.

16. There was general agreement that market mechanisms are important, but not sufficient to ensure adequate investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy. Many delegations shared their experiences in promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy. Many countries have established specific time-bound targets for the share of renewables in energy consumption or electricity and for increasing energy efficiency. Other instruments used include specific renewable energy laws, energy standards, labelling, sustainable transport systems, public support to research and development and promoting energy self-sufficiency in remote areas.

17. Whereas many noted the need for financial incentives, one delegation noted that in its country renewable energy became a major energy source on a purely commercial basis, due to an appropriate regulatory framework, as well as favourable natural conditions. One delegation noted that subsidies to fossil fuels are often unavoidable in developing countries to ensure affordable access, but that such subsidies could be limited. Many delegations noted the positive role of the CDM.

18. Some countries noted the cost effectiveness of sugarcane-based biofuels and large-scale hydropower, and cautioned against focusing attention solely on wind and solar in the promotion of renewable energy. International markets for renewable energy should be open, allowing developing countries to harness their comparative advantages, for example in biofuels. The often untapped potential of geothermal, as a now widely established technology, was also mentioned. Some delegations drew the attention to a need for investments in fossil fuels to meet growing energy demand and highlighted the role of cleaner fuels.

19. Delegations stressed the important role of technology transfer and North-South, South-South and triangular technical cooperation in energy, including through global partnerships. Reference was also made to the potential of genuine partnerships that promote the participation of all relevant stakeholders. Some countries noted a need for flexible intellectual property right regimes and suggested placing existing new and renewable energy technologies into the public domain. Joint research and development was mentioned as an effective mechanism. Some delegations supported the creation of an international mechanism for access and transfer of renewable energy technologies, and cited the Consultative Group in International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) as possible model. Countries also expressed support for the new International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

20. Delegations recognized the value of intergovernmental dialogue on energy cooperation, including in the form of further informal General Assembly debates on energy efficiency and renewable energy. Some delegations addressed the question of new energy governance under the United Nations, while many expressed support to UN-Energy. Overall, capacity building support and sharing of experiences were seen as important roles for the United Nations.

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THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

18 June 2009

Statement of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly, to the Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Energy Efficiency, Energy Conservation and New and Renewable Sources of Energy

Excellencies,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Professor Lee Hoe-sung,
Dear Friends,

I am very pleased to open this thematic dialogue of the General Assembly on energy efficiency, energy conservation and new and renewable sources of energy. Today's discussion will bring to our Membership not only a diversity of views, but also of disciplines and knowledge. It is appropriate that the General Assembly avail itself of the growing expertise on these issues. The challenges we are examining today are not separate from the converging crises that are confronting us as an international community: climate change, the financial and economic crisis, and the food crisis, among others. Rather, these crises converge, interact, fuel and aggravate each other.

Energy, of course, is necessary for our daily survival. But it is also the keystone to all economic development. Our future development and survival as a healthy species depend on the long-term availability of energy from sources that are dependable, safe and environmentally sound.

Today, however, we have no single source of energy or mix of sources of energy to meet these needs. We are clearly on an unsustainable energy path.

Climate change is now threatening humanity and placed Mother Earth in peril because we, especially those of us in the North, have based our economies on the reckless, inefficient and polluting consumption of fossil fuels.

This awareness has finally taken hold. People everywhere – from scientists, politicians and everyday citizens – are pressing for fundamental changes in the ways we use energy and where it comes from. Clearly, the time for renewable sources of energy has arrived and, as the rapid increase in production during this decade indicates, the prospects for renewable energy have never looked better, even in the face of recession.

While the industrialized North is using far too much energy, most people of the world do not have access to sufficient energy. Many live in countries where economic growth is essential to lift them out of poverty. How do we deal with inequitable energy patterns and safeguard the right to development at the same time?

The facts are stark. Unless we undertake fundamental changes, world consumption of energy is expected to grow by around 40 per cent by the year 2030. Experts argue that we need a technology revolution that will enable us to reconcile our development and growing energy needs with steps to mitigate climate change and the general carrying capacity of the earth.

How can we do this?

I have called for this thematic debate at the specific request of a diverse group of 18 concerned Member States. I regret that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, His Excellency Sergei Martynov, is unable to join us here today as planned, as he was one of the initial advocates for this meeting. We hope to provide the opportunity all Member States to review the options at hand and to discuss the policy changes required to change our course. Our dialogue is made that much more urgent due to the economic crisis, which reduces economic activity all around the world.

We all hope, especially for the sake of the more vulnerable among us, that we will recover from this downturn before too long. It would be an enormous step forward if this recovery were coupled with visionary policies, innovative technologies and broad incentives for new and renewable sources of energy.

We have entered a period of price fluctuations, uncertainty and instability regarding energy production and pricing. Unfortunately, lower energy prices tend to negatively affect decision-making regarding investment in new and renewable sources of energy.

What can policy-makers do to reverse this trend?

While economic incentive packages for growth can counter these negative trends to some extent, it is hard to see that they can reverse it given the magnitude of the problem and the scarce funds for counter-cyclical measures in most countries.

Today, we are locked in by our technology base. While technology is constantly being developed, there is a need for incentives to accelerate the process. States and the public sector must support the goals of renewable energy. And, by providing appropriate incentives, the private sector can also be mobilized in a concerted fashion.

In setting policies, it is important that we are aware of the different costs involved in developing new and renewable sources of energy. Each source of renewable energy, particularly solar, wind and hydro power, have distinct advantages and few drawbacks, the most important of which is the cost of initial research and development.

Public funds for investment and official development assistance are key but insufficient. We must continue to fund these technologies and rest assured that the initial higher costs will be offset by availability of inexhaustible and pollution-free energy.

I encourage you to study how financial flows can be directed towards development of renewable energy production in developing countries by means of incentives such as the clean development mechanism under the Kyoto protocol.

When the world gathers in Copenhagen in December for the Conference of the Parties of the Climate Change Convention, I hope we will be presented with a whole new generation of financial incentives, based on the Kyoto mechanisms, that will connect the financial flows of the carbon markets of developed countries to the development of new projects in developing countries.

We increasingly recognize that common but differentiated responsibilities and collective efforts are needed everywhere in the world to make the transition to a low carbon economy. We need the commitment and leadership of major carbon-emitting countries to demonstrate the way forward. In this regard, I applaud the bold new vision for a clean energy future being articulated by the administration in Washington.

But we are all responsible for achieving a successful agreement in Copenhagen. I trust that the debate you are undertaking today in the General Assembly will contribute substantively to developing a new paradigm for alternative energy production and conservation that ensure our economic and environmental sustainability and well being.

Thank you.

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THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

18 June 2009

Statement of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly, to the Second Session of the Genereal Assembly Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Energy Efficiency, Energy Conservation and New and Renewable Sources of Energy

H.E. Dr. Mohamed Waheed Hassan,
Vice President of the Republic of Maldives,
Excellencies,
Dear Friends,

I am pleased to open the second session of this day-long Assembly discussion about energy efficiency, energy conservation and new and renewable sources of energy. This morning we heard how important our energy polices are to the meeting the commitments to the Millennium Development Goals as well as the enormous challenges posed by climate change. We were reminded in different ways how solving energy, food and water problems in developing countries takes us a long way to meeting the related MDGs.

This afternoon, we will explore the policies and investment needed to promote renewable energy and energy efficiency. And -- a great concern of mine -- how we can ensure that these key investments are sustained in the midst of the prolonged recession that is provoking so much uncertainty in development planning.

We are honoured to open this session with a keynote address by H.E. Dr. Mohamed Waheed Hassan, Vice President of the Republic of Maldives. It is very appropriate that the leader of a small island state provide us with his unique perspective on the challenges that face so many of the least developed and landlocked countries nations arising from the energy/climate-change nexus. Developing countries are already suffering the consequences of climate change, especially the small islands, like Maldives, that face rising sea levels.

Let us explore the need for funds, capacity, science and technology for adaptation and vulnerability assessments and policies to mitigate the impact of climate change. We must identify ways to fulfill existing financial obligations under the Climate Change Convention.

There is also a need to reorient development policies, including those of the World Bank, towards preventive adaptation, disaster reduction policies and risk-management.

A few weeks ago, the sixty-third session of the General Assembly adopted by consensus a landmark resolution on "Climate change and its possible security implications". It calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries for achieving the objectives of the Climate Change Convention, taking into

account the global nature of climate change and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The United Nations and its organs must now intensify their efforts in considering and addressing climate change, including its possible security implications.

I think we are seeing more clearly that the interconnection of climate change, energy security and efficient use of energy resources are all issues of strategic importance for ensuring sustainable development, access to energy and eradication of poverty.

Likewise, Member States, particularly the most vulnerable, see the need to find a path that leads to sustainable development through clean energy. All of us should see this as a moral imperative – an urgent duty to protect our fellow brothers and sisters from small island states and least developed countries. I look forward to seeing how this discussion unfolds.

Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1 May 2009

Excellency,

In follow up to the letter dated 23 February from this Office, and further to the recent informal briefing by my Cabinet advisor for Energy and Climate Change issues, Mr. Diego Malpede, I am rescheduling the date for the Interactive Thematic Dialogue of United Nations General Assembly on "Energy Efficiency, Energy Conservation and New and Renewable Sources of Energy" to Thursday, 18 June in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

I am convening this important thematic dialogue at the request of a broad range of Member States, and in partnership with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The day's dialogue will be organized into two separate panels, bringing together a range of expertise from science, governments, public-private partnerships and civil society organizations, as well as leading UN officials involved in energy issues and development.

Please find attached a brief description of the format for the dialogue and key questions to help orient the discussion on these vital and complex issues.

A final program with more detailed information regarding the panelists and their biographical information will be submitted in due course.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann

All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers
to the United Nations

THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

12 June 2009

Excellency,

As a follow up to the letter dated 1 May 2009 from this Office and following informal consultations, I am sending the program of the Interactive Thematic Dialogue of the United Nations General Assembly on "Energy Efficiency, Energy Conservation and New and Renewable Sources of Energy", to be held next Thursday, 18 June in the Trusteeship Council Chamber. We are also including a brief document with biographical information of the keynote speakers, the panellists and the moderators.

I would encourage a real and fruitful interactive dialogue among the Member States and the panellists and moderators. I strongly suggest to limit the number of written statements or speeches only to the political or regional groups of the United Nations. The event is an excellent opportunity to discuss substantially the important energy issues that are linked to poverty eradication, the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and to the crucial challenges of sustainable development and the current and future living conditions of the planet. A summary of the debate will be prepared with the assistance of the DESA Secretariat and will be circulated to the member states.

I would like to thank the Member States, the sponsor countries, the Division for Sustainable Development at the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships and the United Nations Foundation for the continuous support to this Presidency in the organization of the Dialogue.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann

All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers
to the United Nations