



**Keynote address
by**

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**UN Day Dialogues:
*Energy for Sustainable Development***

Venue: Congres Center

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2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

- Vice Minister of Energy, Mr. Sadibekov
- Ms. Cihan Sultanoglu, UN Commissioner-General and UN Assistant Secretary-General
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to first of all express my warm appreciation to the Government and the people of Kazakhstan for hosting the Energy Ministerial and 8th Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development.

It gives me a great pleasure to deliver the keynote address at this meeting on accelerating progress towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 on sustainable energy. I am particularly delighted that UN agencies have joined forces today to discuss the importance of sustainable energy as an accelerator to advance the sustainable development goals, and how we can together provide better support to countries struggling with energy poverty.

The global 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, adopted in 2015, provides a blueprint for global development that is broader, more detailed and more comprehensive than ever before. The 2030 Agenda has a special focus on vulnerable countries with its central theme of leaving no one behind.

It has been often said that Sustainable Development Goals 7 on sustainable energy is a front-loading goal as the progress in other areas is deeply linked to access to energy. This is very true as energy access is essential for private sector development, productive capacity building and expansion of trade and it has strong linkages to climate action, health, education, water and food security and women's empowerment. Therefore, it is clear that energy is a key development enabler, and

meeting the targets of SDG 7 is central to achieving the 2030 Agenda and implementing the Paris Agreement.

My Office advocates for the 91 vulnerable countries, with a total population of about 1.1 billion. These 91 countries are categorized into three main groups; least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states. Even though some of these vulnerable countries are coal, oil, gas and hydro-electricity producers; the access to energy remains a major challenge. The latest data on the proportion of population having access to electricity in Least Developed Countries (LDC) is 38%, in Landlocked Developing countries (LLDC) it is 60%, and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) it is 77%. However this data hides the disparities between countries; with some countries trailing way behind with an access rate as low as 5%.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we move on to implement this new agenda, I wish to stress that the SDGs and the Paris Climate Agreement can only be successful if we pay special attention to the vulnerable countries - LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. The Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs, the Vienna Programme of Action for the LLDCs and the SAMOA Pathway for the SIDS underscore the pivotal role of sustainable energy in the development of these countries. The 2030 Agenda acknowledges the special needs of these 3 groups of vulnerable countries. It also supports the implementation of the three programmes of action and recognizes that these programmes are integral to the 2030 Agenda.

During the past years, a strong global momentum has been built around sustainable energy. We have witnessed many encouraging developments. 2016 was a record

year for renewables; global renewable energy generation capacity increased by 161 gigawatts (GW), making it the strongest year ever for new capacity additions.

However, despite these advancements, more than 1 billion people still have little or no access to electricity and Africa's poorest still today pay up to 80 times more for energy than many people in the United Kingdom and other developed countries. It is important to underline that this is unacceptable in this day and age of globalization and interdependence, and with unprecedented global capacity and extraordinary advances in science and technology. Therefore, it is important to take stock of the ongoing efforts and identify ways and means to further strengthen the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders. Ending energy poverty in vulnerable countries and ensuring that no country or person is left behind has to become a priority for all of us.

Landlocked developing countries face additional geographic barriers to economic, and sustainable energy, development. Landlocked developing countries suffer from high transport and transport-related trade costs, which increases the cost of doing business in those countries, inhibits productive capacity gains, and limits economic growth opportunities. Energy is critical to turn around this situation, and support industrialization needed to enable the LLDCs to achieve economic diversification, improve value addition and become more competitive in international markets. Increasing energy access, reliability, and affordability in the landlocked developing countries will create much more favorable conditions for advancing economic diversification, productive capacities and building a stronger industrial base in these countries.

Similarly, the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are geographically isolated from global markets, with transport to the remote islands posing logistical and financial challenges for trade. SIDS are generally heavily reliant on imported fossil fuels for both transport and electricity generation, which makes them highly vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices. Developing affordable renewable energy solutions that will lead to a major shift from a high dependence on imported fossil fuels, to more sustainable locally harnessed energy sources is of key importance for these countries.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

In the past four years, my Office has been carrying out activities in the area of promoting sustainable energy in the vulnerable countries. We want to make sure that the vulnerable countries will also achieve the global goals on energy, which will then spark development across different sectors. In this regard, we have brought together the leaders and Energy Ministers with development partners to discuss the challenges they face in enhancing their energy access. It has clearly emerged from these discussions that national ownership for energy transition is there, and LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are eager to scale-up and speed-up their energy initiatives.

My office recently convened two regional meetings uniquely focused on accelerating the sustainable energy transition in the LDCs —one for Asia-Pacific LDCs that took place in Kathmandu, Nepal, in March this year and one for African LDCs, in Tanzania, in December 2016.

The meetings also showcased a wide range of effective business models, technologies, and public-private partnerships to inspire and encourage participants and increase investment flows to the energy sector in LDCs. The meetings yielded many practical recommendations for accelerating energy access. I would like to share with you some of the recommendations as they are equally relevant for today's dialogue.

- First, it was highlighted that moving a project from initial plan to bankable project phase requires a significant amount of time and resources. Increased funding for project preparation at the early stages is particularly important for accelerating the energy infrastructure transformation in vulnerable countries.
- Second, in order to expand access to energy, the allocation of a significant share of the national budget is also needed and it demonstrates country ownership and leadership.
- Third, sector reforms have been crucial to create an enabling environment for private investment. Rules and regulations need to be clear and predictable in order to enable private investment.
- Forth, decentralized renewable approaches tend to be more cost-effective, and innovative. Small-scale and off-grid clean energy technologies will play a key role in bringing power to remote areas and the poor.
- Also, the importance of regional cooperation was underlined. Collaboration in energy generation, trade and transmission can help to increase efficiency in energy production and reduce costs.

To act on these recommendations in a way that will bring light to the people still living in energy poverty, all stakeholders including bilateral donors, international

organisations, development finance institutions, private sector and civil society need to join their efforts. The international community must provide the necessary support to leverage financial resources and help LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS to build capacity in order to seize the opportunity for transformative change that will scale up poverty eradication and sustainable development in these countries.

This was also highlighted in a High Level Seminar on Accelerating Sustainable Energy for all LLDCs through Innovative Partnerships my Office co-organised with Government of Austria, UNIDO, and Sustainable Energy for All in Vienna, in 2016.

It is encouraging to see the rapid progress that innovative financing models together with new technologies can achieve. For example, in Bangladesh, the innovative financing model for Solar Home Systems has led to rapid expansion of their use and over 4.5 million Solar Home Systems has been installed all over Bangladesh till now. In Bangladesh the energy output from solar increased from 51 to 212 GIGAWATTS Hours between 2010 and 2014. Whereas, Bhutan has successfully tapped into its hydropower resources. The power sector has become the largest source of government revenue and the premier contributor to the country's gross domestic product.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Now, it is time to move from words to action and bring the global policy direction to the national level. Many of the vulnerable countries have already prepared their national energy strategies and are keen to move forward. They need the support of their partners to move ahead and to accelerate the progress.

In conclusion, let us work together to ensure that the vulnerable countries will equally benefit of the global momentum and will be able to reach the sustainable development goal 7. Let us make Goal 7 a success together and let us make sustainable energy reality also in vulnerable countries in a true spirit of partnership of all and partnership for all.

Thank you.