

Check against delivery



Keynote address by

Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu

High Representative
and
Under-Secretary-General

for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States

High-Level Forum on South-South Cooperation on Climate Change

Keynote Speech at the Thematic Session I: Strengthening South-South Climate
Cooperation for Low-Carbon Energy
Transition [5 mins]

Venue: China Pavilion
COP24 Katowice, Poland

12 December 2018
11:20-12:50

Hon Ministers

Jorge (Chediek), our esteemed UNOSSC Director and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation,
Distinguished panel members,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

well, first I really must thank the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation for organizing this High-Level Forum on South-South Cooperation on Climate Change.

My congratulations to the organizers for bringing together such an eminent group of panel members.

The IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 degrees has underlined the absolute imperative, the urgency of transitioning to a low-carbon world, by all nations.

We truly are in this all together!

Developing nations continue to face a two-fold challenge – switching existing power generation to low emissions sources and meeting future energy demand in a sustainable manner.

The estimates to fill existing investment gaps for developing countries run in the trillions.

It is clear that we need high rates of economic growth for developing countries to meet their aspirations and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

But not just any growth.

Growth must be inclusive, sustained, and sustainable.

Growth must also decouple from greenhouse gas emissions.

Yet, lack of access and often exorbitant costs of access to affordable and reliable energy remain major barriers to development.

This is not an abstract - this goes from being able to power rural health clinics to local agricultural processing to add value to production to providing basic public services. This is a daily reality for real people ! It is at our own peril if we ignore that reality.

There is an on-going transformation of the world's energy systems bringing about cost declines, advances in technologies, and new business models. All this can help in accelerating the deployment of renewable energy technologies, increasing energy efficiency and making clean energy more affordable.

These significant advancements are not accessible everywhere though - they do not include all ! We now and urgently so must find ways to capitalize on this and ensure that we give the means to ALL to be on track to achieve our common goals on energy.

OHRLSS is a VOICE for the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states. These all are nations and that means more than one billion human beings facing unique development challenges due to structural handicaps tied to geographical disadvantages.

One half of the world's population without access to electricity are located in least developed countries !

Many vulnerable countries, especially the small island states and landlocked countries, are far away from the major markets, highly dependent on energy from outside, and suffer disproportionately from resulting higher energy costs.

The move towards renewable energy and low-carbon development is a promising and economically viable option in these countries. On the plus side, these are often countries with high renewable energy potential .

Just think, in my own country already thirty years ago we tried to harvest ocean energy through a tidal wave and wind energy project!

Things are moving too slowly but we are not starting everywhere just from scratch and believe me, there is a lot of local innovation, knowledge and above all great determination just waiting for a helping hand !

South-South cooperation offers great opportunities here.

It holds the promise to provide effective support in accelerating the energy transition in the most vulnerable countries, through technology transfer, capacity building, peer learning, knowledge sharing and financial resources.

Scaling up finance remains a top priority. The regions with the highest needs, such as sub-Saharan Africa, receive the smallest share of global energy finance. Other recent studies on flow of grants are also quite enlightening!

Capacity building support is critical - it is needed in policy design and implementation of SDG 7, including for feasibility studies, project design and implementation.

So, let us with urgency build on working examples we already have and they all show us the important role that South-South cooperation plays in the low-carbon transition.

As for OHRLSS action, I thank the Government of India for providing valuable financial assistance to the ongoing Medium-Term Review of the Vienna Programme of Action for the landlocked developing countries as well as other activities. Sustainable energy and sustainable transport are critical enablers in this Programme, as well as the Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs.

Turkey, in turn, is hosting and providing generous financial and technical assistance for the Technology Bank for the LDCs. This new UN organ will help LDCs with access to science, technology and the capacity to innovate.

I also must pay tribute to other developing countries – including the LDCs themselves – that have pledged financial contributions to the Technology Bank.

Last but certainly not least, OHRLLS will partner with GEIDCO to organize a global conference on scaling-up energy access and finance in Least Developed Countries, in May 2019, in Beijing, China. We hope to see many of you there.

As the saying goes “where there is a will - there is a way” this is what people want to see from us.

Thank you.