

## **Message from the Chairman of CSD-15**

Given today's global challenges, few are as urgent, complex, and inter-linked as those stemming from energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change – the thematic cluster of issues of CSD-14 and CSD-15. These issues affect every part of our economies and every segment of our societies and impact on the health of our planet at local, regional and global levels.

A world in which one-third of its population lacks access to modern energy services will not be sustainable. When they have to trek miles to gather biomass fuels, only to suffer from health damaging pollutants, girls and women will never be truly empowered to pursue sustainable livelihoods. When their reading time is cut short at dusk because of a lack of electricity, children will never be able to fully reap the benefits of schooling. When they have only intermittent power supply, hospitals and clinics cannot provide a basic range of medical services, not to mention maintaining refrigeration as part of the “cold chain” for storing vaccines. Industrial development will never take off without an efficient and reliable modern energy infrastructure.

Lack of access to modern energy services, weak infrastructure and lack of institutional and human capacities, as well as limited availability of modern technologies and financial resources, are further inhibiting progress in industrial development in many developing countries. These are key barriers to achieving Millennium Development Goals and Johannesburg targets and commitments.

Increasing transparency, predictability and stability of the global energy markets, improving the investment climate in the energy sector including energy infrastructure development, promoting energy efficiency and energy saving, diversifying energy mix and reducing energy poverty will contribute in the construction of the pathway for sustainable development.

In addition to their social and economic dimensions, the issues in the CSD-14 and CSD-15 cluster pose daunting environmental challenges. Developing countries and Small Island Developing States bear the brunt of rural and urban air pollution, as well as indoor air pollution, and face the greatest risks from climate change.

CSD-14 succeeded in highlighting inter-related challenges, specific barriers and constraints to solutions in relation to the four issues of the cluster. Equally important, CSD-14 showcased a range of best practices and lessons learned, as reflected in panel presentations, interactive discussion, national reports and case studies. CSD-14 demonstrated that there are tremendous potentials for progress in energy efficiency, energy diversification, advanced and cleaner energy technologies, as well as renewable energy. Small- and medium-sized enterprises can play a greater role as engines of growth in developing countries, given the right supporting framework.

Combined with the results of the Partnerships Fair, Learning Centre and close to 100 side events and related activities, CSD-14 helped shed fresh light on the critical factors and conditions necessary for success. Chair Aleksishvili ably captured these results in his summary, laying the groundwork for CSD-15.

The task ahead for CSD-15 is to take decisions on specific policy options and practical measures to overcome barriers and constraints and to expedite implementation, in partnership with UN agencies and other international and regional organizations, as well as major groups. CSD-15 should therefore be a forward-looking and action-oriented session.

To this end, I invite all stakeholders to keep this process alive and to contribute more case studies and provide additional inputs to the Matrix to the Secretariat so as to enable the Secretariat to continue its work on the Matrix.

CSD remains the high-level intergovernmental forum within the United Nations system at which interrelated issues of sustainable development are addressed in an integrated manner. CSD-15 will continue to take an integrated approach to energy, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change, with particular attention to inter-linkages, means of implementation and other cross-cutting issues.

The importance of the work of CSD-15 cannot be emphasized enough. The policy options and actions Governments are expected to adopt at CSD-15, based on the work of CSD-14 and the intergovernmental preparatory meeting scheduled for February 2007, will help define and guide our collaborative efforts in the coming years to meet the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg targets and commitments in energy, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change.

As Chairman of CSD-15, I will do my utmost, in close cooperation with my colleagues on the Bureau and with assistance from the Secretariat, to guide CSD-15 to a successful conclusion. In the coming months I will consult with the Bureau on specific modalities of organisation of work and will keep delegations informed of the decisions and recommendations of the Bureau. The Bureau members will be requested to regularly brief their respective constituents on progress in preparations for CSD-15.

I will also take the lead in mobilizing broad-based Ministerial participation and invite Ministers of relevant portfolios to attend CSD-15, provide guidance on policy options and actions and most importantly, to take bold, imaginative, action-oriented initiatives during CSD-15.

While keeping in mind the gravity of the challenges facing us, I am optimistic about the future. The coming decades will witness significant investments in energy infrastructure, as well as in industrial development. We must seize the opportunity to make a difference by making the right policy decisions and choices.

I encourage Governments, UN agencies and other international and regional organizations, as well as major groups, to use CSD-15 as a platform for launching specific initiatives, activities, and projects. Big or small, these actions, when combined, will have a real impact.

**H.E. Mr. Abdullah Hamad Al-Attiyah**

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&  
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