

United Nations Forum on Energy Efficiency and Energy Security for Sustainable Development:

Taking Collaborative Action for Mitigating Climate Change

Welcome Address

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Your Excellency, Deputy Minister Dr. Koh, Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Energy,
Mr. Han, Special Envoy on Climate Change of the United Nations Secretary-General,
Mr. Bang, President of Korea Energy Economics Institute,
Mr. Kim, Vice-Chairman of Korea Chamber Commerce and Industry,
Distinguished, experts and participants,

First of all, let me thank all of you present here for following the invitation by the organizers to this important *Forum on Energy Efficiency and Energy Security for Sustainable Development* on a short notice, at the busy end of the year, and following right after the United Nations Bali Conference on Climate Change.

I am particularly pleased of the global nature of this event, with participation from almost all regions (Asia and the Pacific, Africa, North America, South America, Europe), developing countries, economies in transition, and developed countries – truly a United Nations Forum.

Together with our generous hosts and co-organizers, the *Korean Energy Economics Institute* and the *Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry*, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs as part of the United Nations Secretariat in New York has invited to this Forum because energy for sustainable development plays an important role in our activities and in serving the member states of the United Nations.

The forum for intergovernmental discussions on all issues relating to sustainable development is since its foundation at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 the *Commission on Sustainable Development*. It meets annually in New York to review progress on the implementation of goals defined at the Rio Summit, the Agenda 21 as the most prominent of them, and at the other large World Summit dedicated to Sustainable Development of Johannesburg in 2002.

The Commission on Sustainable Development discussed energy for sustainable as a major theme during its ninth session in 2000/2001. The CSD recognized the centrality of energy to achieving sustainable development goals. It has again discussed energy for sustainable development as one theme together with industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere, and climate change in 2006 and earlier this year. Sustainable

development goals are not restricted to environmental protection and making energy production and use climate-proof, but they pertain to the three dimensions of sustainable development, including as important pillars also economic and social development.

At the United Nations at the top of our sustainable development agenda of course are development aspects. Therefore we always highlight the link between improved access to reliable, affordable and environmentally sound energy and the positive impacts it has on poverty eradication and standards of living.

Energy efficiency can also offer not only economic advantages but social and environmental co-benefits. We will hear today and tomorrow about the many different energy efficient technologies and processes that are already available in different economic sectors. However, let us be reminded by some of the outcomes of the Commission on Sustainable Development deliberations on energy efficiency that in my opinion have relevance for this meeting as well:

- First, that many market-related and institutional barriers need to be overcome and improved energy efficiency technologies need to be made available to promote the adoption and use of energy efficiency measures in many countries.
- Second, that greater international cooperation and further access to financing and technology transfer will be important for mobilizing energy efficiency investments in developing countries.
- And finally, that considerable scope exists for international technical assistance to assess and provide advice on opportunities to improve energy efficiency in all sectors, which could be coupled with concessionary or grant financing to implement recommended improvements.

Welcoming you to Seoul means for me to express in the name of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs our gratefulness to the two co-organizers, the Korea Energy Economics Institute – my special thanks to the president of the institute Mr. Bang, and our physical hosts the Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry – also my special thanks to its Vice Chairman, Mr. Kim. It has been indeed a pleasure – also in the name of my colleagues who have been in contact with your colleagues – in working with both your organizations in making this event happen.

Thank you very much.