



# ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

## TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

### THE PRESIDENT OF ECOSOC

### REMARKS AT THE ASTANA ECONOMIC FORUM

### NEW ENERGY – NEW ECONOMY

Astana, 15 June 2017

Your Excellency Mr Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of Kazakhstan  
Excellences,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to address this distinguished audience on the occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Astana Economic Forum and in the particular topic of New Energy – New Economy.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development declares that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement to achieve sustainable development.

It resolves that no one will be left behind.

Its achievement therefore means a world free of hunger and disease.

A world with universal access to quality education, health care, and clean and safe water and sanitation.

A world where every child grows up free from violence and exploitation and where every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality.

A world where every youth, man and woman has a decent job that enables them to contribute to economic growth and shared prosperity.

And a world where we take decisive action to safeguard a sustainable future for the generations to come.



# ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

## TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

This is the vision that the availability of sustainable energy can empower and whose achievement it can fuel, because it cuts across all of these essential global objectives.

Recognizing the importance of energy in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals, the 2030 Agenda includes the first global universal goal on energy – Sustainable Development Goal 7.

The goal addresses access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all by 2030 with specific targets that relate to energy access, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Sustainable energy is needed for building modern infrastructure and for technology and industrial development as well as communication and transportation of goods and people. Sustainable cities rely on energy efficient systems for buildings and transportation.

Access to modern energy must aim to unlock new entrepreneurial opportunities for the growing workforce, so that they can become the next global engine to the new economies of the future. Enormous technological progress is reducing costs globally. Still, poor people continue to pay significantly higher energy prices.

Investing in innovation remains crucial to make sustainable energy affordable and accessible to everyone. New technologies, new business models, and new approaches to capacity building are all needed to transform the world and achieve global sustainable development.

We can make decisive progress only if we act together. Partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources are indispensable to success. Local partnerships are becoming increasingly important as a growing share of the global population lives in cities.

Transformations of energy systems are underway in many parts of the world. We must sustain, grow and accelerate this trend and momentum.



# ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

## TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

We must change our mindsets to coordinate, across ministries, agencies, sectors, disciplines, as well as between local, provincial and central government levels to ensure integration and interlinkages.

That will require strong sustained leadership and commitment in government, business and civil society.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Advances in clean energy technology are fuelling new economies all over the world. Global renewable-energy employment climbed to almost 10 million in 2016. China, Brazil, the United States, India, Japan and Germany accounted for most of the renewable-energy jobs.

In China for example, 3.6 million people worked in renewables in 2016, a rise of 3.4 per cent. Solar photovoltaic was the largest employer in 2016, with 3.1 million jobs — up 12 per cent from 2015 — mainly in China, the United States and India. In the United States, jobs in the solar industry increased 17 times faster than the overall economy, growing 24.5 per cent from the previous year to over 260,000.

New wind installations contributed to a 7 per cent increase in global wind employment, raising it up to 1.2 million jobs.

Globally, 62 per cent of the jobs are located in Asia. Installation and manufacturing jobs continue to shift to the region, which has become global centre for solar PV fabrication.

In Africa, utility-scale renewable energy developments have made great strides, with South Africa and North Africa accounting for three-quarters of the continent's 62,000 renewable jobs.

The pursuit of clean energy is at the heart of many countries and represents the key factor in their aspirations for a better future and new economies supporting prosperity and sustainable development.

After the dramatic cost reductions in clean technologies of the past several years, wind and solar systems without subsidies can provide the



# ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

## TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

lowest cost of new electrical power in an increasing number of countries, even in the developing world.

Together, the new renewable energy sources of wind, solar, biomass and waste, geothermal, small hydro and marine accounted for 55% of all the gigawatts of new power generation added worldwide in 2016.

Greening investment and making our financial systems climate resilient are key to effecting such transformative change.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Achieving the new, shared vision of the Sustainable Development Goals will require profound transformations in the way we pursue economic growth, social development and the environment protection for the future.

Governments need to exercise leadership to set visions and priorities that pull all stakeholders in the same direction.

Businesses will have to adapt their operating principles to support sustainable development and commit to driving innovation, particularly in low-carbon technology.

Civil society organizations must work to bring about a wider public understanding of sustainable development and to help shift individual behaviors.

Science and academia will have to provide timely evidence on progress, challenges and opportunities.

Timely and regular reviews of progress are crucial in improving action. In this regards, the United Nations' High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development offers the global platform to follow-up and review the 2030 Agenda. It also provides space for the sharing of experiences and lesson-learning which will be crucial to achieve the transformative change we all desire.



# ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

## TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

In 2018, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, the High Level Political Forum will review SDG7 on energy for the first time. This will be an important milestone to take stock of lessons and resolve to scale up efforts towards 2030. Preparations for the Forum are well underway.

In my capacity as the President of the Economic and Social Council, I look forward to the active engagement of all stakeholders in order to:

End energy poverty,

Fight climate change, and

Make sustainable energy truly a catalysis for the 2030 Agenda.

Together we can make it happen.

I thank you!