



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

19 February 2021

Excellency,

I have the honour to circulate the summary of the fifth Morning Dialogue convened this session to discuss “Galvanizing Action on Energy for All: The High-Level Dialogue on Energy and the Road to 2050” on Friday, 22 January 2021.

I encourage all Member States to scale-up ambitions in the run-up to the High-level Dialogue on Energy and COP26, including by adopting Energy Compacts and volunteering for Global Champion roles.

SDG 7 lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. The Decade of Action and Delivery is the moment to build back better by ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy, and upscaling renewable energy and achieving energy efficiency.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Volkan Bozkir'.

Volkan BOZKIR

All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



Morning Dialogue Summary



Galvanizing Action on Energy for All:

the High-Level Dialogue on Energy and the Road to 2050

Friday, 22 January 2021

The President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Volkan BOZKIR convened his fifth Morning Dialogue on the topic of ‘***Galvanizing Action on Energy for All: The High-Level Dialogue on Energy and the Road to 2050***’ on Friday, 22 January 2021. The Dialogue was attended by nine Ambassadors, as well as SRSG for Sustainable Energy for All, Co-Chair of UN Energy and the High-level Dialogue on Energy, Ms. Damilola Ogunbiyi. Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary General of DESA, was represented by the Officer-in-Charge of DESA’s Division for Sustainable Development Goals, Mr. Alexander Trepelkov.

The series of Morning Dialogues offers an opportunity to engage in informal discussions on issues of concern for Member States and the President of the General Assembly. The discussions do not represent a formal process and will not generate any official report. They are held under Chatham House rules, with a primary objective of promoting genuine dialogue that seeks solutions and provides ideas for concrete action, without constituting a parallel track for existing processes.

All participants agreed that the role of the UN General Assembly remains crucial in advancing the implementation of SDG7. The key points raised during the Dialogue were as follows:

- SDG 7 lies at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Success in eradicating poverty, strengthening food security, empowering women, creating jobs, combatting climate change, protecting biodiversity, and ensuring digital connectivity to leave no one behind is impaired without universal access to modern energy, and greater energy sustainability and efficiency.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has thrown 400 million people back into poverty, with 150 million pushed into extreme poverty who have lost all access to energy. Currently 2.8 billion people are living without clean cooking. On average, women and children spend 1.4 hours a day collecting fuel. Freeing up women, girls and youth’s time is a prerequisite for investments in their education and life choices, encouraging them to seize economic opportunities and participate in economic, political, and social life.

- Building back better from COVID-19 affords a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transition to sustainable energy, which will give countries numerous economic competitive advantages. Every dollar spent on sustainable energy provides 93 cents of return for GDP above business as usual.
- Energy access remains slow and accelerating access could provide, for example, women in Africa 59% more earnings than for women without access. Estimates suggest that every one million dollars invested in renewables or energy flexibility within recovery plans would create at least 25 jobs, while each million invested in efficiency would create about 10 jobs. Countries' energy mix must be respected, and national development policies cannot change overnight. Notwithstanding this, efforts must be made to ensure that realistic targets can be achieved by 2030. The potential role of new sustainable technologies like hydrogen and geothermal energy was also emphasized.
- Commitments by developed countries to make available 100 billion dollars annually to fund climate action must be respected. Participants also underscored that public and private funding should be utilized to implement the Paris Agreement.

High Level Dialogue on Energy at the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly

There was acknowledgement that this morning dialogue should help advance the planning of the High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on Energy at the forthcoming session of the UN General Assembly. The following elements were highlighted:

- The world is currently losing the battle for energy and achieving SDG7. The HLD on Energy, to be convened by the Secretary-General in September 2021, has heightened expectations that it should accelerate the achievement of the SDG7, the overall 2030 Agenda and the objectives of the Paris Agreement.
- The HLD should utilize and accelerate partnerships and coalitions with experienced stakeholders with a history of success in sustainable energy. It was noted that the COP26 energy transition campaign is important because many communities still rely on fossil fuels and need national strategies to retrain workers in those sectors.
- Furthermore, participants emphasized the need to facilitate platforms to highlight and support existing transition initiatives, particularly the action tracks from the Secretary General's 2019 Climate Summit. Reference was also made to the EU-Africa Energy Partnership, and the International Solar Alliance, which recently amended its framework agreement to allow all UN Member States to join.
- In the run-up to the HLD, participants were encouraged to adopt "Energy Compacts", which are new forms of multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments, with tracking frameworks supported by UN-Energy and the UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All 2014-2024.

- Energy compacts should not only have a meaningful follow up mechanism but also provide a platform for support to action by all stakeholders specially energy companies.
- The HLD should help connect the dots across all sectors and ensure synergies with global conferences and summits including on biodiversity, food, transport, water and climate. It should also result in a global plan of action to achieve SDG7 by 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050.
- The recently announced champions for the Energy Dialogue's five themes (i) energy access, (ii) energy transition, (iii) energy to advance other SDGs, (iv) capacity building and data, and (v) finance and investment, should focus on an ambitious agenda such as (a) creating roadmaps for the implementation of SDG7; (b) securing carbon neutrality by 2050; (c) scaling up action and tripling investments in energy access and transition and; (d) catalyzing all stakeholders and enhancing partnerships.
- UN-Energy and the COP26 Presidency should continue to work closely to ensure that the outcomes of the HLD will support and compliment COP26, notably the Nationally Determined Contributions review process and expressions of greater ambition on energy and climate change.
- It was noted that because 789 million people – mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa – lack access to electricity, it is imperative to dedicate a segment specifically to Africa in the Energy Dialogue.
- The PGA stressed that reducing the energy and digital divides simultaneously is necessary both to containing and adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic. Energy services are key to preventing disease and fighting pandemics – from powering healthcare facilities and supplying clean water for essential hygiene, to enabling communications and IT. The PGA informed that the upcoming High-Level Thematic Debate on Digital Cooperation and Connectivity on 27 April 2021 will address this interlinkage.
- SRSO Ogunbiyi made a special call urging Member States to share their views on how to make the HLD on Energy as impactful as possible. The PGA encouraged all participants to work with SRSO Ogunbiyi and UN-Energy to mobilize commitments and accelerate action in the run up to the HLD. He emphasized the importance of Member States adopting Energy Compacts and becoming Global Champions for SDG7, and called on all participants to share these messages of encouragement to the wider membership.