



**UN NEWS CENTRE**

With breaking stories and  
newswire products from



## World must welcome 7 billionth citizen with sustainable future, says Ban



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses the annual Global Green Growth Forum

11 October 2011 –

[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon kept up his drum beat for sustainable development today, warning a high-level public-private forum in Denmark that the world must do much more than sing “Happy Birthday” when its 7 billionth citizen is born later this month.

“We have to give this child – and its whole generation – a sustainable future,” he [told](#) the 3G Global Green Forum, bringing together leaders from government, business, finance and civil society to accelerate ‘bottom up’ country- and business-led progress on climate change and other environmental challenges.

“We have to embrace sustainable agriculture so she has enough food to eat. We have to expand clean energy so that he can reap the benefits of modern productivity without suffering the drawbacks of climate change. And we have to ensure greater opportunities and decent jobs so that people can enjoy lives of dignity and fulfilment,” he said, fresh from yesterday’s address to a conference in Oslo, Norway, where he called for a “clean energy revolution.”

According to UN estimates, the world’s 7 billionth citizen will be born on 31 October.

Today’s forum in Copenhagen, initiated by the Danish Government, and organized by The 3G Global Green Growth Institute, aims to create new and expand existing public-private partnerships in areas including energy efficiency, renewable resources, sustainable transport and water.

“The three Gs of Global Green Growth must respond to social, economic and environmental challenges equally, because we live in an era of three Fs: crises on Food, Fuel and Finance. So we need to enhance the three Es: the Economy, the Environment and global Equity,” Mr. Ban said, stressing that the old economic models are not working for the countries and companies that embraced them.

He noted that while 20 per cent of the world’s people lack basic electricity services and nearly 3 billion burn biomass, far too many rely on depletable energy sources and use them unsustainably.

“This world of plenty and poverty cannot be sustained,” he stressed. “We need to marshal all forces to power progress in a way that protects our planet and promotes the welfare of all people.

“We need to come together – rich and poor. We need CEOs (chief executive officers), investors, utility companies and renewable energy businesses, government officials and research scientists. We need bold and bankable solutions.”

He envisioned a world for 2030 where all people have modern energy services and the rate of improvement in energy efficiency and the share of renewable energy in the global mix is doubled.

Mr. Ban cited several recent examples as way stations on the road to this vision: the Danish company Maersk’s designing of the world’s most efficient container ships that cut carbon emissions by half; the Mexican Eurus wind farm in Oaxaca that will supply one quarter of the country’s energy needs; and the plans of LG Electronics in the Republic of Korea to invest \$7 billion in electric car batteries, LED lighting and solar panels.

“I appreciate this engagement. But my message to all countries is the same: we need to do more,” he said. “Together, we can generate a clean energy transformation, set the world on course for low-carbon growth, and create conditions for a truly sustainable future.”

Asked at a later [news conference](#) about the absence of the United States from the forum, he said he believed the US is very much committed to realizing green growth.

In a meeting with Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt, Mr. Ban discussed the forum's goals as well as the situation in Sudan, Afghanistan and those countries affected by the Arab Spring, such as Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Egypt.

Mr. Ban visited the site of the new UN City in Copenhagen, which is being built to bring together under one roof the more than 1,000 UN employees in what is the world's sixth largest UN city, and told a town-hall meeting of staff that this will help to strengthen not only the UN's visibility in Denmark, but facilitate inter-agency communication, coordination and cooperation.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

['Clean energy revolution' crucial to ensure growth in poorer countries – Ban](#)