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## **Ban calls for global revolution to ensure clean energy for all**



17 January 2011 – With 1.6 billion people in developing countries still lacking access to electricity, [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today called for a global revolution to address the world’s energy challenges.

“Our challenge is transformation. We need a global clean energy revolution – a revolution that makes energy available and affordable for all,” Mr. Ban said in his [address](#) to the Fourth World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

“This is essential for minimizing climate risks, for reducing poverty and improving global health, for empowering women and meeting the Millennium Development Goals [eight anti-poverty targets with a 2015 deadline], for global economic growth, peace and security, and the health of the planet,” he added.

The Secretary-General stressed that the decisions taken now will have far-reaching consequences. The prevailing fossil fuel-based economy is contributing to climate change – and global energy needs are growing rapidly.

In 20 years, he noted, energy consumption will rise by 40 per cent, mostly in developing countries, where 1.6 billion people still lack access to electricity, and where 3 billion people rely on traditional biomass fuels for cooking, heating, and other basic household needs.

The Secretary-General’s Advisory Group on Energy and Climate Change, set up in 2009, has recommended two “bold but achievable” targets for 2030 – universal access to modern energy sources and a 40 per cent increase in energy efficiency.

“To achieve this, we must invest in the intellectual capital that will create new, green technologies. We need to increase private and public spending on research and development, and Governments need to create the right incentives,” said Mr. Ban.

“So let us pledge to invest wisely. We need to get our priorities right. People everywhere should be able to enjoy the health, educational and social benefits that modern energy sources offer,” he said, adding: “We are on the brink of an exciting, sustainable future. Clean energy for all.”

Last month the UN General Assembly decided to proclaim 2012 as the “International Year for Sustainable Energy for All” with the aim of promoting new and renewable energy technologies, including measures to improve access to such technologies.

Next year also marks 20 years since the Rio Earth Summit laid a blueprint for sustainable development, an issue that Mr. Ban has made one of his top priorities.

“As we look forward to the Rio+20 Conference, let us be aware that clean energy and a low-carbon economy are among the keys to unlocking the door to a safer, more peaceful and prosperous world for all.

“We count on you – leaders of governments, civil society and the private sector – to turn this vision into reality. Together, we can change the lives of billions of people.”

[Addressing](#) a forum of young future energy leaders, the Secretary-General stressed the need to “get serious about sustainable development.”

In addition to the 3 billion people who still rely on traditional biomass fuels and coal, he highlighted the fact that 2 million people, mostly women and children, die every year due to indoor air pollution – nearly double the number of deaths worldwide from malaria.

“This is unacceptable and it is avoidable. It is time to close the global access gap.”

Mr. Ban also lauded the Abu Dhabi authorities for their Masdar Initiative, a project intended to showcase a sustainable, clean-energy future. Its centrepiece is Masdar City, a green, planned community located in Abu Dhabi, built by corporations including the Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, and funded by the United Arab Emirates Government.

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