

SDG 7 Lead Discussant

Let me thank the panelists for setting the stage for our discussion so eloquently.

The message emerging is clear:

Energy is central to the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

In order to deliver on the promises:

- 1. We must step up.** Without urgent action, we will fall short.
- 2. But, our panelists have also said that SDG 7 is within reach.** The transformation of the world's energy systems is already underway. We see advances in technologies, rapid cost declines and policy shifts in many countries.
- 3. Achieving SDG 7 will catalyse actions to combat climate change – the solution to climate change is energy policy.**
- 4. A multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group convened by UNDESA has in support of the SDG 7 review at HLPF, prepared 27 policy briefs and proposed a 'Global Agenda for Accelerated SDG 7 Action'.**
- 5. The Global Agenda presents a set of priority actions to be taken by all stakeholders, recognizing the special challenges facing LDCs and SIDS.**
- 6. The Agenda focuses on actions to:**
 - a Advance SDG7 implementation**
 - b Strengthen interlinkages between SDG7 and other SDGs**
 - c Take regional differences into account; and**
 - d Move toward a sustainable and equitable energy future**
- 7. Building on the presentations I would like to focus on three recommendations the working group has made and ask some questions to the panelists:**
 - a First, make clean cooking solutions a top political priority**

- i In my view, the most disappointing SDG7 status is access to clean cooking. This is a collective failure by all of us. We can put a Tesla out in space but we seem unable to solve the cooking problem!
 - ii This leads me to the following question:
 - iii Who owns the cooking problem? Who feels it is their responsibility to take action?
 - 1 The energy sector has, given the status, by and large failed. Maybe it is better to take clean cooking out of the energy sector? And we can not leave this issue to charity – it has to become a business area.
- 8. Secondly, we need to scale up investments in energy efficiency across all sectors of the economy
 - a “If energy efficiency really was so cheap, it would happen anyway.” – many says.
 - b But financial institutions view financing of energy efficiency projects significantly riskier compared to other types of business projects.
 - c Changing human behavior supported by policy actions and standard setting, is also required.
 - d We also know that women attach more importance to energy-efficient transport and fuels; they are more willing to change their behaviors to achieve sustainability goals.
 - e This leads me to the question - how can we encourage behavioural change and how can we make financial institutions more aware of energy efficiency financing?
- 9. Thirdly, we need to double financing for SDG7:
 - a Crowding in private finance is essential but we are not doing too well, especially not in Africa.

- b According to the International Finance Corporation's annual report on Private Participation in Infrastructure for 2017 investments in the world's poorest countries reached 8.5 percent of global investments with \$7.9 billion worth of investments across 35 projects in 17 countries. Only 11 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa received investments in 2017.
 - c Maybe we need to rethink our toolbox and focus on domestic resource mobilization - taxation and strengthening of local financial systems, including ensuring a higher savings rate, developing national financial institutions to support SMEs, and local currency lending.
 - d This leaves me with the question – how come that we have not been more successful in attracting energy sector investments from the private sector?
10. **To implement the Global Agenda all stakeholders need to step up. We need to form partnerships and translate the Global Agenda into specific, strategic, bold and time-bound plans of action. This would include facilitation of efforts by the UN Secretariat, including the UN Regional Commissions and in coordination with the UN development system, international organizations, multilateral development banks, governments, businesses, civil society and other stakeholders.**
11. **Thank you**