

**'Renewable energy is limitless and will last forever,' says Ban at global debate**

Credit: UNEP

17 January 2016 – Everyone involved in energy—governments, the private sector, investors and financial institutions, cities, and people everywhere—has understood that we can no longer burn our way to global prosperity, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon declared today at a debate hosted by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and the Financial Times.

"We all know that renewable energy is limitless and will last forever," Mr. Ban said in the United Arab Emirates capital, Abu Dhabi.

"It offers us great security and peace of mind," he added. "Costs have come down so quickly that it is now often the cheapest option. And the more renewable energy facilities we build, the cheaper they will become."

The UN chief noted that since his last visit in 2012, enormous changes have occurred—with the springing up of solar panels and wind turbines. He also highlighted the landmark agreements reach last year by the international community on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and on climate change.

"Renewable energy is central to both," he stressed. "It will help provide solutions to the climate challenge, and to poverty, food security and many other challenges. Clean, renewable energy will act as a catalyst and a force-multiplier for the SDGs. If we achieve it well before 2030, it will vastly improve our chances of achieving the other SDGs."

The Secretary-General urged leaders to maintain the momentum and redouble efforts on all their initiatives, insisting that access to clean energy is essential to leave no one behind in the move to zero carbon emissions.

"Events like this are vital to spread the word and spur other companies and institutions to examine their energy consumption and take part in the transition," he said. "One of the highlights in Paris [COP21] was the wave of announcements from the private sector, investors and financial institutions, cities and governments on their commitments to renewables."

Recalling that in 2011 he launched Sustainable Energy for All, as a global platform for all partners to come together across issues of energy access, renewables and energy efficiency, Mr. Ban underlined that thousands of actors from all sectors and regions of the world have stepped up to the challenge.

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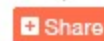


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