

Speech at/to: Keynote speech at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, Leaders Dialogue: Global partnerships for development to create jobs and improve sustainable lifestyles

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Secretary-General,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Sustainable development is a very broad agenda. It requires

environmental protection

gender equality,

economic growth

and equitable distribution.

The two greatest challenges we are facing today are poverty and global warming.

We cannot choose between the two. We need to reconcile the goal of alleviating poverty and cutting emissions.

We need a new climate agreement applicable to all.

The negotiations leading up to the meeting in Paris in 2015 will be demanding. We have great trust in our experts, but unless we –

the political leaders –

give the negotiations our attention, we will not be able to reach the results we need.

But we cannot simply wait for a new agreement.

We need action now while we negotiate.

Three central areas of action can both

deliver short term emission cuts and

help prepare for an effective global agreement:

First, reduce emissions from deforestation.

This is the single measure that has given the largest reductions of emissions. Halting deforestation amounts to 1/3 of the mitigation potential to stay on the 2 degree pathway by 2020.

Norway works to reduce the emissions from deforestation. In Brazil it is estimated that reduced deforestation has decreased emissions by around 1 billion tons of CO₂ per year.

This is almost 20 times the total emissions of Norway.

Second, reduce emissions of short-lived climate forcers

Cuts in emissions of short-lived climate forcers can make a significant contribution to prevent global warming.

We welcome the news that The United States and China have agreed to phase down production and consumption of hydrofluorocarbons.

Third, climate pricing and climate finance

By putting a price on carbon we make it expensive to pollute, and profitable to reduce emissions.

Carbon pricing gives the right incentives to producers and consumers.

And it promotes the development of new technology.

In addition, carbon pricing is a source of mobilizing financial resources for climate action.

At present only around 10 % of global greenhouse gas emissions have an explicit carbon price.

We have succeeded in establishing a carbon market in Europe. There are shortcomings, but we have at least managed to set a ceiling, which is lowered every year.

Many other countries and regions are currently introducing pricing schemes.

Even more effective than pricing schemes would be to remove all subsidies on fossil fuels.

Such subsidies amount to 500 billion USD. Subsidies undermine energy efficiency and give fewer incentives to switch to renewables.

We will not succeed in achieving a new agreement in 2015 unless we also make progress on climate financing. We must stand by the pledge we made in Copenhagen to mobilize 100 billion USD per year by 2020.

This is a huge task. It is challenging but feasible. We also know a variety of sources, public and private, that can help reaching the goal.

Political leaders also have a job to do to counter the perception that ambitious environmental policies will hamper growth.

The Nordic countries have shown the opposite.

In the 1990s all Nordic countries introduced green taxes by shifting taxation from labour to activities harmful to the environment, such as CO₂ emissions.

Not without resistance and scepticism. Today 80 % of Norwegian greenhouse gas emissions are covered by taxes and tradable quotas.

The Nordic countries have experienced strong economic growth - and the emissions are going down.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Climate change has a tendency to slip down our agendas and priorities.

Today we have an opportunity to change that.

Together we are inaugurating this new High Level Forum on sustainable development.

Let us use it to put climate change on top of the international agenda.

Thank you