

Global Conference
**Rural Energy Access: A Nexus Approach to Sustainable
Development and Poverty Eradication**
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
4-6 December 2013

**Session 1: 10:00 – 13:00 LEADERSHIP FOR RURAL ENERGY ACCESS
HIGH-LEVEL PANEL (Lead Organizers: UNECA / SE4ALL / UNDESA)**

Moderator: Dr. Ivan VERA, UN-Energy Secretary, UNDESA

- Mr. Olav KJORVEN, Special Advisor to the UNDP Administrator on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
- Dr. Carsten HELLPAP, Director, EnDev Programme, GIZ
- Dr. Carlos DORA, Coordinator, Public Health and Environment Department, World Health Organization
- Ms. Agnes DASEWICZ, Director, Private Capital Group for Africa, Power Africa Initiative
- Ms. Aneri Patel, Senior Associate, Energy Access initiative, UN Foundation

Excellences, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. On behalf of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the Division for Sustainable Development of UNDESA and UN-Energy, I would like to welcome all of you to the second sub-session of the High Level Panel of this important Global Conference on Rural Energy Access: A Nexus Approach to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication.
2. I am honour to have the opportunity to moderate this second session of the High Level Panel in which I will be introducing our distinguished and very-well respected panellists.
3. Before introducing the panellists, I would like to emphasise that UNDESA and UN-Energy are fully committed to continuing advancing and promoting the objectives of the initiative of the United Nations Secretary General on Sustainable Energy for All. We clearly understand that **no country will be able to developed or achieve sustainable development without access to reliable and affordable modern energy services.** And therefore within the specific objectives of the SE4All initiative we consider the goal of **Universal Energy Access by 2030** urgent and in need of immediate effective action and support.

4. We further recognize that the majority of the 1.2 to 1.4 billion people in the world without electricity and the majority of the 2.8 billion still using solid biomass and animal waste for heating and cooking **live in rural areas**. We know that some of the poorest communities in the world live in rural isolated areas and that many of the people in these communities, and in particular children and women, live in very precarious conditions not only without energy but also without clean water, proper sanitation, minimum education, minimum health services, sufficient food and without security. **If we think about it, this segment of the population deserves the highest priority and the highest attention because they are INDEED at the Bottom of the Development Pyramid.** They are desperate because they want to improve their wellbeing, they want jobs and they want to be productive, and most that anything else they want a better future for their children.
5. And this is the reason we are asking people to join us in this conference to exchange ideas, to create awareness, to discuss the enabling factors, the new technologies and the programmes that will induce a major change towards prosperity and sustainable development in rural communities.
6. And this is the reason we need to move forward with a NEXUS approach in which we act together, all the stakeholders, practitioners, public and private organizations, donors, international organizations and UN organizations all acting as One UN. And with a NEXUS approach we hope to discover valuable synergies and integrated solutions on energy, water, food security, education, health, gender, jobs, and the environment.
7. The conference also offers an opportunity to continue the conversation initiated last week at the UN in New York about the need to include an energy goal within the new set of Sustainable Development Goals being discussed for the post-2015 Development Agenda.
8. As we approach the end of 2013, this conference also serves as a pre-launch of 2014-2024 the UN Decade of SE4All. We invite participating organizations to use the conference as a platform to make announcements about new initiatives, commitments, partnerships, programmes and projects in the field of rural energy access. Part of the last session (Session 6: Moving Forward) of the conference will be open for organizations to make their announcements and explain their support to the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All.

9. To finalize my remarks and before introducing the distinguished panellists of this session, I would like to mention that the conference has attracted over 250 participants representing all stakeholders from 40 countries. We also have a technology exhibit with about 30 organizations show casing their equipment, products and services.