

5th session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

**Remarks on Energy by Ambassador Masood Khan,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan on behalf of India and Sri Lanka and Pakistan**

Co-Chairs,

I have the honour to deliver these remarks on behalf of India, Sri Lanka and my own delegation, Pakistan.

We would like to express thanks to Director General IRENA, Mr. Adnan Amin, and Dr. Vijay Modi for their contributions yesterday. We are also grateful for the information note that the Technical Support Team (TST) has presented to us on energy for kick- starting discussions.

Co-Chairs,

Energy is at the heart of our efforts in crafting a 'Future We Want' given its crucial links to economic and social development and, more importantly, with environmental sustainability. Solutions to climate change will not materialize unless we address the way we produce and consume energy.

In addition, we cannot hope to make an abiding difference to social indicators if energy supply is not assured.

Much of the discussion on Energy so far has focused on the UN Secretary General's Initiative on Sustainable Energy for All and how it can or should be translated into a Sustainable Development Goal.

Co-Chairs,

What is the central challenge? And what role would Sustainable Development Goal on Energy should play in stimulating international cooperation in this field

First, the foremost challenge is one of promoting access to modern energy services. Some 1.6 billion people live in South Asia today. It regrettably has nearly 50% of the world's poorest. It is in this region again where nearly 50 percent of the population - or nearly 800 million people – lack access to electricity. In addition, nearly one billion people - more than half of the sub-region's population, still rely on biomass for cooking and heating.

A quick comparison with the global figures of 1.2 billion people who have no access to energy - reveals that more than half of these people live in South Asia. Similarly, data indicates that more than 2.8 billion people globally rely on biomass for cooking, out of this nearly 40% of these people live in my region.

From South Asian perspective improvement in energy access is, therefore, the most pressing challenge and one, which want to place as one of the priorities of the Sustainable Development Goals.

While the three goals proposed under SE4ALL could have relatively different value for countries, it is clear that universal energy access will have to take primacy. Developing countries reliance on traditional sources would remain significant due to cost differential and inaccessibility to advanced technology in a large-scale shift to renewable sources. A universal goal on energy should present a differentiated approach where the developed countries, with better resources and technologies, could take the lead.

Second, another key element for the consideration is the per capita consumption of energy. A targeted approach to reducing the imbalance in the consumption of energy across countries will help us tackle climate change and ensure that planetary boundaries are not breached.

The world average per capita energy consumption is 1.8 tons of oil equivalent (toe). In comparison, the average consumption in OECD countries is 4.28 tons, while the average consumption in Africa is a little over half a ton.

In terms of the group of developing countries, I am speaking for, the per capita energy consumption in India is 0.6 tons, Sri Lanka 0.5 tons and Pakistan 0.48 tons, respectively.

Given that energy consumption is directly related to economic growth, its consumption is equally related to consumption patterns and carbon emissions. It is also clear that as developing countries grow and strive to provide basic access to energy to their people, their per capita share of energy consumption will certainly grow.

It would be useful to craft an approach based on per capita energy consumption and promote convergence between the consumption levels of developed and developing countries. By doing so, we would be simultaneously addressing sustainable consumption and climate change issues.

Third, the imperative of economic growth must not be overlooked. Again, South Asia has nearly 50% of the world poorest. Faster economic growth and social and economic justice are a predominant requirement and a political imperative. Economic growth is linked inextricably to the consumption of energy and, more importantly, cheap energy especially in transport and industrial development.

We note the emphasis on decoupling energy consumption from use of natural resources and establishing a level playing field between renewable and traditional sources of energy.

A closer look at evidence and data reveals that today renewable energy is almost 18% in total final energy consumption across the globe. This definition includes traditional biomass - which accounts for nearly half of the renewable energy - and the remainder is largely hydropower. Modern forms of energy - wind, solar, geothermal, waste and marine - contribute roughly 1% of the global energy consumption today.

Even if we seek to double the share of renewable energy from 18% to 36%, 64% of the world would still rely on traditional sources. To this end, our work should not discount the use of improving energy efficiency and technology for traditional sources.

Co Chair,

In conclusion, our efforts should first aim at providing universal access and secondly, establishing targets that seek to achieve the overall objective of promoting economic growth, development, industrialization, employment, health and empowerment. None of the sustainable development goals should be seen in isolation from the broader sustainable development objective or the overarching imperative of economic growth.

I thank you Co-Chairs.