

بِسْمِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Opening Remarks

By

H.E. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah

Deputy Premier

Minister of Energy and Industry

State of Qatar

Chairman of the CSD-15

*The 15th session of the Commission on
Sustainable Development*

New York, 30 April 2007

**Distinguished Delegates,
Colleagues,**

We have come a long way in our preparations for the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Since my election as Chairman of this Commission, I have met with many delegations and have listened to a diverse range of views. On the crucial importance of the thematic issues before us, there is a unanimous view. I firmly believe that there is strong political will among member States to make real progress here during this session and that there exists a lot of common ground.

I urge delegations to seize this opportunity.

The Review session of CSD-14 succeeded in identifying barriers and constraints, as well as lessons learned in the thematic areas. Some concrete case studies have been captured in the Matrix. Our work has benefited from regional discussions and contributions from UN organizations and Major Groups.

In February this year, we held the intergovernmental preparatory meeting for CSD-15. Delegates participated actively in the IPM and proposed many specific policy options. I appreciate these contributions and the commitments of delegations to a successful outcome of CSD-15.

Let there be no doubt - the Commission only can succeed in its work when all member States work together in a constructive spirit of partnership.

We have a historical responsibility to current and future generations to make progress here, and we have a historical opportunity to do so. The international community has become increasingly aware that in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, there must be improved access to modern energy services. As we start our negotiations this week, I urge delegates to keep in mind that over 2 billion people still depend on traditional biomass to meet their energy needs. Women and children still trek for miles to gather firewood and fall victim to poor health as a result of indoor air pollution. Our discussions in CSD prove indisputably that developing countries must have improved access to modern energy services in order to improve the livelihoods of the poor and to achieve their sustainable development goals.

Energy also drives industrial development. For sustainable industrial development to occur, it is important that developing countries have access to the latest, most energy- and resource- efficient and environmentally-sound technologies, as they build up their industrial capacities. We must create favourable conditions for technology transfer and foster a broader competitive environment which encourages industries continuously to improve efficiency. Further progress on the trade agenda could help developing countries gain greater market access for their industrial goods.

More sustainable patterns of production and consumption will contribute to energy efficiency, while also being vitally important to reducing air pollution, combating climate change and promoting sustainable industrial development. I call on delegations to address the complex, inter-linked thematic cluster of issues before the Commission from a broad sustainable development perspective.

Our discussions at the IPM and the policy options proposed by member States clearly demonstrate that in order for the international community to effectively address the energy, industrial development, air pollution, atmosphere and climate change. Our policy options and actions need to focus on areas where these problems originate from, and on areas where there are negative impacts. We require actions that address inter-linkages, cross-cutting issues and that enhance means of implementation.

Let us focus on areas where the Commission can add value. I urge delegations to identify those policy options and actions that yield co-benefits and that offer win-win solutions; and that help reduce poverty, improve access to energy, promote industrial development, reduce air pollution and combat climate change.

I call on UN agencies to step up support to developing countries. I invite Major Groups to make your contributions. Combining your enthusiasm, your expertise, and your resources, the nine of you can do a lot.

**Distinguished delegates
Colleagues,**

In my message to all stakeholders last year, I highlighted the fact that with one third of the world without access to modern energy, our world is not a sustainable one; neither will our world be sustainable if the current patterns of consumption and production continue. A fundamental challenge we face, which underpins the full range of obstacles and constraints identified during the review year and which the IPM has sought to address, is how to achieve, in a balanced and integrated manner, the multiple objectives of improving access to modern energy services, promoting sustainable industrial development, significantly reducing air pollution and effectively combating climate change, through both mitigation measures and long-term adaptation strategies.

There is no intergovernmental body other than CSD that is better equipped to take on this fundamental challenge.

Let us work together, in partnership, and chart an action-oriented course for the coming years. If we work together, we surely can make a difference.

I will count on your support in this common endeavour.

Thank you.