

Official Statement by Ms. Connie Hedegaard,

Danish Minister for Environment / CSD 15

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CSD 15 offers a unique opportunity to set an important yardstick in our global effort to curb the unsustainable use of energy, to promote sustainable development for the benefit of billions, and to counter the challenges associated with climate changes.

But, frankly: My question after these first few days is: *Are we living up to our responsibilities? To be frank with you, my feeling is that too many forces are trying to prevent us from taking big enough steps. This is not what we need.*

What we need from the global level is strong commitments, ambitious goals and targets, and effective implementation and review instruments.

The Danish lesson in that regard has been very clear: Decoupling of energy consumption from economic growth is not only possible but a precondition for a sustainable future. Denmark has managed to increase GDP with 70 % over the last 25 years without increasing energy consumption.

Timebound targeting is in my view a fundamental prerequisite for success in our common efforts. In my personal view, we need targets, commitments and goals to be formulated at all relevant levels: In local communities, for the business-sector, at national, and regional as well as global levels, even if such a step still appears provocative.

A crucial first step is therefore to endorse a commitment by all countries to formulate and integrate into their national policies by 2010 specific timebound targets for renewable energy, energy efficiency and access to modern energy services. It is exactly on this point that we can turn all our political ambitions into action – providing stable policy and business frameworks, while meeting the expectation by our constituencies as well as the major groups present today at CSD 15.

And we need an effective follow-up to this session in terms of ensuring progress in advancing the sustainable energy agenda while removing barriers.

In closing: Colleagues: Brinkmanship has to come from you, me – us – and we need a result out of the ordinary from CSD 15.

Mr Chairman, If CSD shall prove worthwhile for us politicians coming here to participate, I must say that it is time for this forum to speed up decisions. To speed up actions. To show some more courage instead of seeking an almost absurdly low common denominator.

Mr. Chairman, I do hope we can produce some progress and thereby meet the expectations by the billions still to be given a sustainable livelihood. In short: To live up to our common responsibility.

Thank you