



The Permanent Mission of Iceland to the United Nations

**Statement by
H.E. Sigrídur Anna Thórdardóttir,
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at the

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of the Commission on Sustainable Development**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman,

For the majority of people on this planet, the question of development is of primary importance. Eliminating poverty is not only a goal of the world's poorest, but for all countries.

Climate change is another challenge that merits our full attention.

These two challenges must be tackled at the same time. This requires new thinking, better policies and a stronger push for cleaner technology. This is especially important in the field of energy, which is the biggest sector contributing to climate change.

Iceland's journey from poverty to economic growth was mostly fuelled by harnessing the country's natural wealth, including its renewable energy sources.

Today geothermal energy and hydropower account for more than 70 percent of Iceland's primary energy consumption. The use of these energy sources is not only positive for the economy, but also in reducing emissions of greenhouse gases.

A low carbon road to development is a possibility for many countries, especially if we fix some of the bumps on the road.

Geothermal energy is a potential energy source in many quarters of the world. Assessments indicate that using existing geothermal technology could provide adequate energy to six hundred million people. Why are we not using this energy source to a greater extent?

There are numerous obstacles facing geothermal in particular and renewable energy in general. The global energy infrastructure is still designed for fossil fuels, and cleaner energy faces an uphill struggle.

Governments, industry and development funding agencies must work harder to promote technologies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This is good not only for combating climate change, but also for sustainable development.

Iceland holds high expectations for CSD 14 and 15.

We must use this occasion to present opportunities for making the energy sector more sustainable.

My government would like to see policies designed and implemented that speed up the development of climate-friendly technology in fields such as geothermal energy. Hydrogen could also be a key component in clean, sustainable energy systems in the future.

We have made presentations on these technologies here at this CSD session, and look forward to working with others – in government and industry – who are working on cleaner energy technology and policies.

There is no magic solution to combating climate change. It will require a large menu of different options. This session of CSD is a good opportunity to present these options. Our task now is to define the path towards a cleaner energy future and agree on measures to follow that path.