



BELARUS

**United Nations General Assembly
Sixty-Third Session**

**Interactive Thematic Dialogue on Energy Efficiency,
Energy Conservation, New and Renewable Sources of Energy**

18 June 2009

Address

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of the Republic of Belarus**

It is a great honour for me to address the participants of the first thematic event of the General Assembly on energy of the future. I was planning my best to attend this very important thematic dialogue in person but last-minute necessity to accompany my Head of State in a foreign visit prevented me, unfortunately, from joining you today in New York.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank sincerely the President of the General Assembly Father d'Escoto Brockman and the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon for commendable vision and foresight they have manifested by supporting and encouraging this promising new thematic process in the General Assembly.

My heartfelt thanks also go to our trusted and dear partners in the General Assembly who have responded positively to the suggestion of Belarus and have shouldered the responsibility of cosponsoring this event. It would be quite appropriate to recall the names of 17 countries which along with Belarus late last year requested the convening of this dialogue on energy efficiency, energy conservation, new and renewable sources of energy. They are **Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, El Salvador, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Namibia, the Philippines, Poland, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the United Arab Emirates and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.**

When it comes to the success of a pioneering effort, the individual example and the strength of individual commitment is very important. We have witnessed such example and strength in the contribution of our partners and we hope that they will continue to be an important driving force for this endeavour in the future.

It is a common truth that increased energy efficiency and energy conservation along with wider application of new and renewable sources of energy will help to diversify energy sources used, enhance energy security, make global economic development more environmentally sound and sustainable and thus contribute favourably to the implementation of the global development agenda built around the MDGs.

Yet when almost two years ago speaking for Belarus in the General Assembly I proposed the idea of this debate, the last thing on our mind was to engage the General Assembly in repeating the obvious or in paying a formal tribute to a fashionable topic. We simply sensed that now is the time and that the General Assembly is the place to cast a bold and responsible look into the **future of energy in our world**. Not a cold technical look but probably a more emotionally charged glance at how we can remedy the existing **global energy divide, inequality and injustice**.

With the increasing dynamics – if not drama – of change in the global patterns of energy production and consumption driven by the inevitable challenges of climate change, depletion of natural resources and economic crisis, it is high time for the international community to adjust its ‘matter-of-fact’ perspective on energy and assume a more thoughtful **existential view of the nature of energy challenges** that we face.

Continuing to regard **the energy agenda** primarily in terms of revenue and loss, benefits and costs, rather than as **a matter of life and death, of development versus decay** effectively fuels intentional lulling ourselves into believing that the existing international cooperation frameworks are adequate and sufficient for dealing with these challenges, that there is no emergency.

We believe that there is an **emergency**. It will no longer suffice to adjust only the structural framework of the global engagement on matters of development. What we need is **a critical adjustment of mentality** regarding the nature of this engagement. Unless we find enough of inner determination to rise from the noble but objectively limited perspective of **charity** on to wholeheartedly embracing **partnership as the only sustainable basis of development**, we will keep going in a current circle of disillusionment, desperation and failure.

To break this circle we need **a breakthrough in our vision of the limits of the attainable:**

- broad **proliferation of advanced energy technologies for development** is possible;
- much more robust **North-South cooperation on energy** is possible;
- tangible results in **dramatically improving energy efficiency and energy conservation** in the world are possible;
- **sustained intergovernmental dialogue on energy cooperation** is possible.

We call on the participants of this dialogue to engage in shaping this pragmatic vision of a breakthrough and, consequently, the beginnings of the **comprehensive United Nations energy agenda.**

As a practical contribution of Belarus to this debate, we suggest the establishment of **a global mechanism** which would ensure that each and every country around the world enjoys an access to technologies for new and renewable sources of energy.

The last thing we would contemplate is a new bureaucratic structure. First and foremost, we envision this mechanism as **a set of practical measures** to improve and strengthen the existing international legal and institutional environment for development, deployment and transfer of advanced energy technologies. Here are some of the measures Belarus proposes for our joint consideration:

1. The United Nations General Assembly could elaborate and adopt **recommendations** on the ways to facilitate development, transfer and application of advanced energy technologies in developing countries and countries with economies in transition based on the use of locally available expertise and infrastructure.
2. A **database** of advanced energy technologies could be created incorporating the WIPO database of patents and recommendations of the expert working group of UNFCCC on transfer of technologies.
3. A **multilateral fund** may be established to finance development, transfer and application of advanced energy technologies building up on the existing best practices, including EUR 250 million Eastern European Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Investment Fund launched by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.
4. The Member-States may want to consider the establishment under the aegis of the United Nations of an **international centre on transfer of**

advanced energy technologies to facilitate cooperation of national entities of interested countries in area of development, transfer and application of energy technologies. In this work it would be quite appropriate to recall and take onboard very promising models and records of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, the OECD International Energy Agency Implementing Agreements and the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for Science and Technology. A significant role in this process could be also played in the future by the newly established International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

I hope that other valuable ideas will be put forward at this forum on how to improve access of all countries to advanced energy technologies. The General Assembly may also discuss the appropriateness of **reflecting the gist of the today's debate in a General Assembly resolution on new and renewable sources of energy** later this year.

Last but not least, I would like to share with you a much more ambitious idea. For quite a few this idea may seem like a very naïve dream. Yet, after all, does not the United Nations have at its core a very idealistic vision and a dream of billions of a peaceful, safe and decent life?

Deeming the forces of the market as the only instrument to tackle global energy problems would be short-sighted and unwise. To be successful not just in our own time but for the sake of our children we have to look at energy through a different lens – one of compassion, empathy and responsibility.

Albert Einstein used to say that nothing truly valuable arises from ambition or from a mere sense of duty. It stems rather from love and devotion towards human beings and towards objective things. I believe that **recognition of the breakthrough energy technologies – of today or tomorrow – as the common property of humankind** would be precisely such act of creating a truly valuable gift of love and devotion for future generations.

This will not happen tomorrow. But it will not hurt to start thinking about this moral duty of ours today.