



PRESS RELEASE

**UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All launched to business community;
private sector engagement seen as crucial to meet objectives**

***First annual Sustainable Energy for All Forum announced, to convene
government, business, civil society leaders at UN, 4-6 June***

(New York/Vienna, 9 April 2014) -- The United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All (2014-2024) was launched to the business community today at the Bloomberg New Energy Finance Summit.

Kandeh Yumkella, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General and chief executive of the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative, called on the private sector to seize the opportunity by innovating and investing to help achieve the initiative's three objectives of ensuring universal access to modern energy services, and doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency and the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix, all by 2030. "The speed and scale of interventions we need to transform our current energy system and ensure shared prosperity lie in the private sector," said Yumkella.

Mr. Yumkella also announced that the United Nations will convene the first annual Sustainable Energy for All Forum on 4-6 June at its New York Headquarters, working with the World Bank and other key partners.

The Forum will gather leaders from Government, the private sector, civil society and international organizations to assess progress on sustainable energy, showcase innovation, present new commitments and spur further action. It will also add momentum towards the UN Climate Change Summit in September, and advance the dialogue on how energy issues should be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda.

Currently one out of five people lives without access to electricity, and nearly 40 per cent of the world's population rely on wood, coal, charcoal or animal waste to cook their food, leading to nearly two million deaths a year, mostly women and children, from lung disease caused by toxic smoke in their homes. How to address this energy poverty while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions and tackling climate change is a crucial global challenge.

"Energy is the golden thread that connects economic growth, increased social equity and a healthy environment. Sustainable development is not possible without sustainable energy," said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. "That is why I launched the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative in 2011. Now, the Decade and Forum will help us stay on track to meet the objectives we have set."

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